



THE WALKING DEAD 23



KIRKMAN • ADLARD • RATHBURN

IMAGE COMICS PRESENTS

THE WALKING DEAD™

ROBERT KIRKMAN

Creator, Writer

CHARLIE ADLARD

Penciler, Inker

CLIFF RATHBURN

Gray Tones

RUS WOOTON

Letterer

TONY MOORE

Cover

FOR IMAGE COMICS

Erik Larsen
Publisher

Todd McFarlane
President

Marc Silvestri
CEO

Jim Valentino
Vice-President

Eric Stephenson
Executive Director

Jim Demonakos
PR & Marketing Coordinator

Mia MacHatton
Accounts Manager

Laurenn McCubbin
Art Director

Allen Hui
Production Artist

Joe Keatinge
Traffic Manager

Jonathan Chan
Production Assistant



www.imagecomics.com

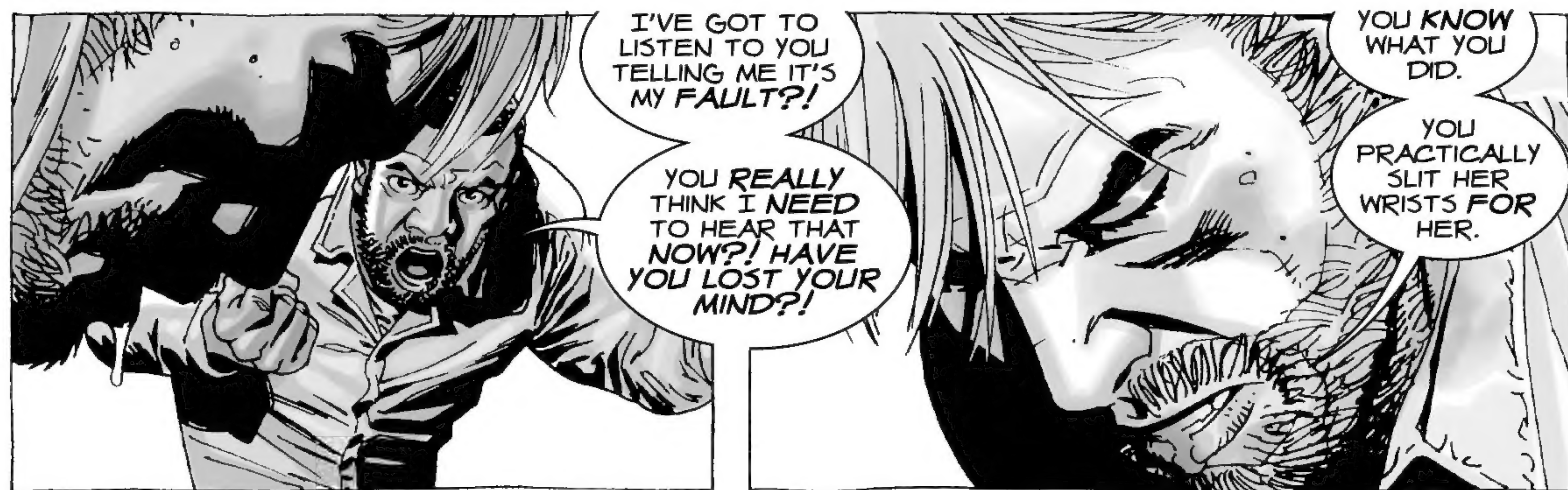
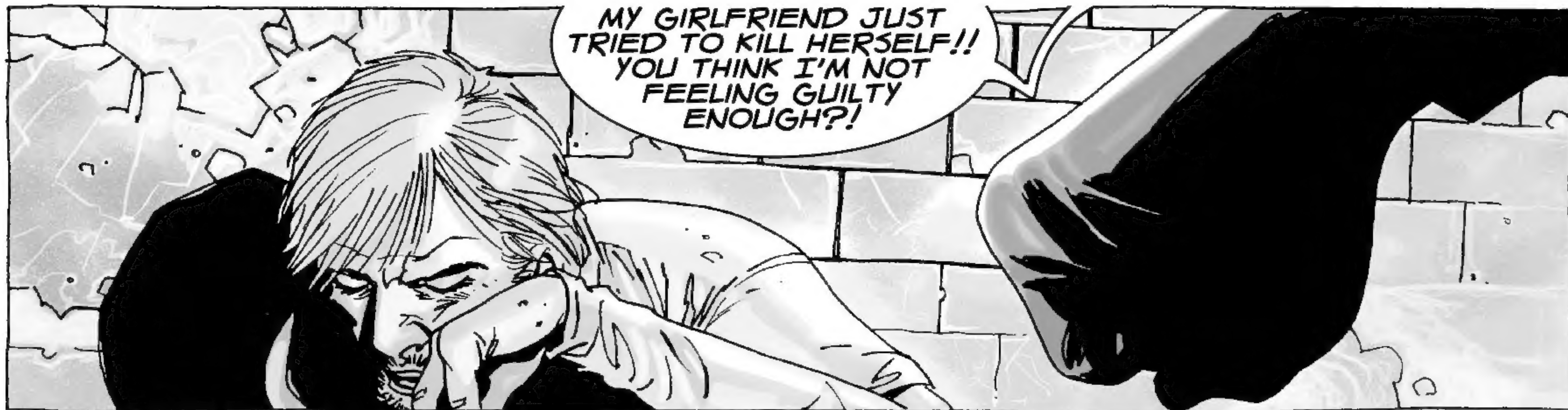
THE WALKING DEAD #23. November 2005.

Published by Image Comics, Inc., Office of publication: 1942 University Avenue, Suite 305, Berkeley, California 94704. Copyright © 2005 Robert Kirkman. All rights reserved.

THE WALKING DEAD™ (including all prominent characters featured in this issue), its logo and all character likenesses are trademarks of Robert Kirkman, unless otherwise noted. Image Comics® is a trademark of Image Comics, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by any means (except for short excerpts for review purposes) without the express written permission of Image Comics, Inc. All names, characters, events and locales in this publication are entirely fictional. Any resemblance to actual persons (living or dead), events or places, without satiric intent, is coincidental. PRINTED IN CANADA

**DON'T
SAY
THAT!!**









ARE YOU
FINISHED?

GET IT THROUGH
YOUR HEAD. IF CAROL
DIES--IT'S YOUR FAULT.
I WANT YOU TO REALIZE
THAT NEXT TIME YOU'RE
FUCKING "LADY
MYSTERIOUS."

AND CALM
THE FUCK
DOWN. TRUTH
GETTING TO
YOU?!

DON'T
FUCKING
HIT ME
AGAIN!



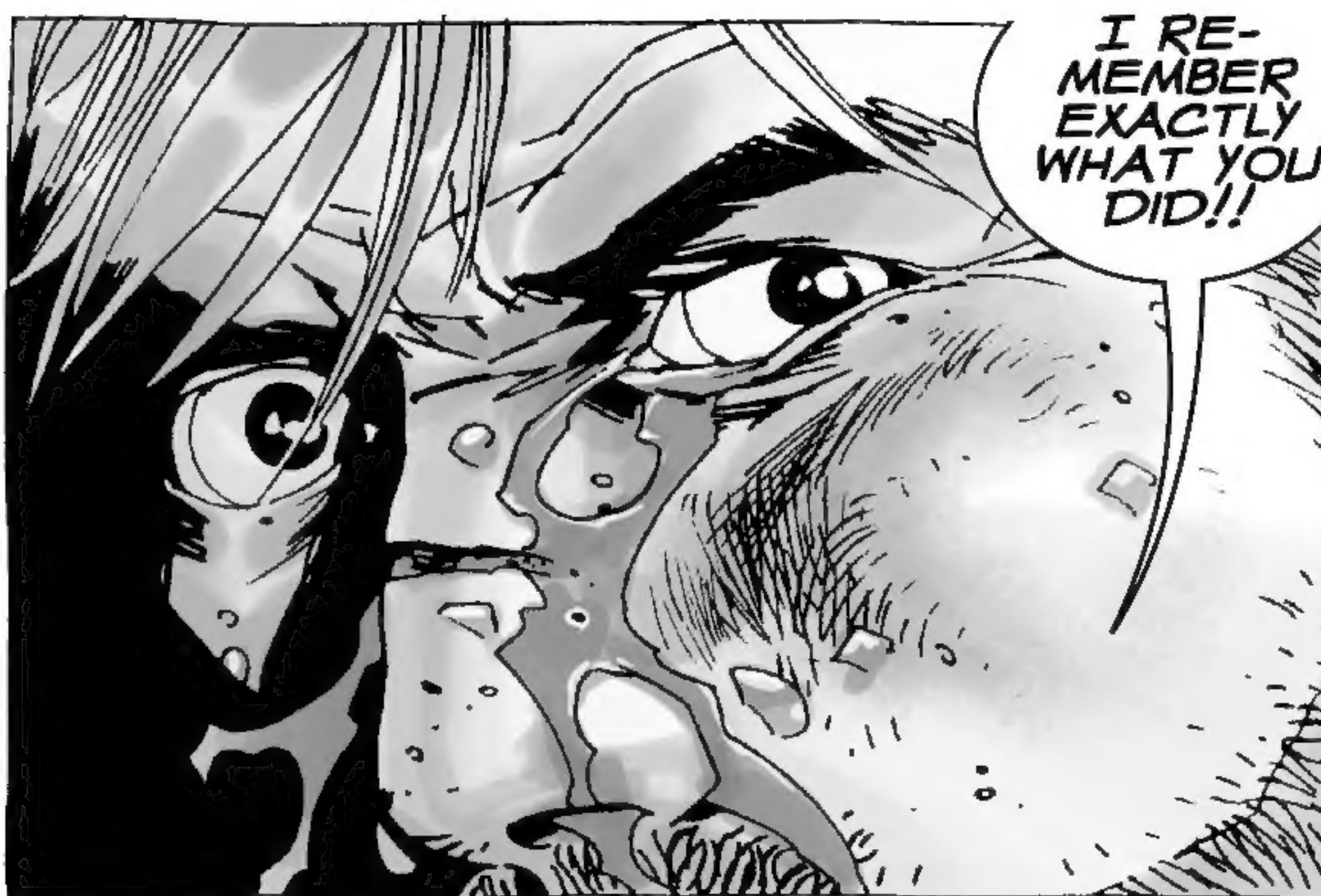
YOU'RE
INSANE. YOU
HAVE LOST
YOUR MIND.



ME?! YOU THINK
I'VE LOST IT!! YOU
THINK I'M BLOCKING
OUT WHAT HAPPENED
BETWEEN YOU AND
CHRIS IN THE
SHOWERS?!



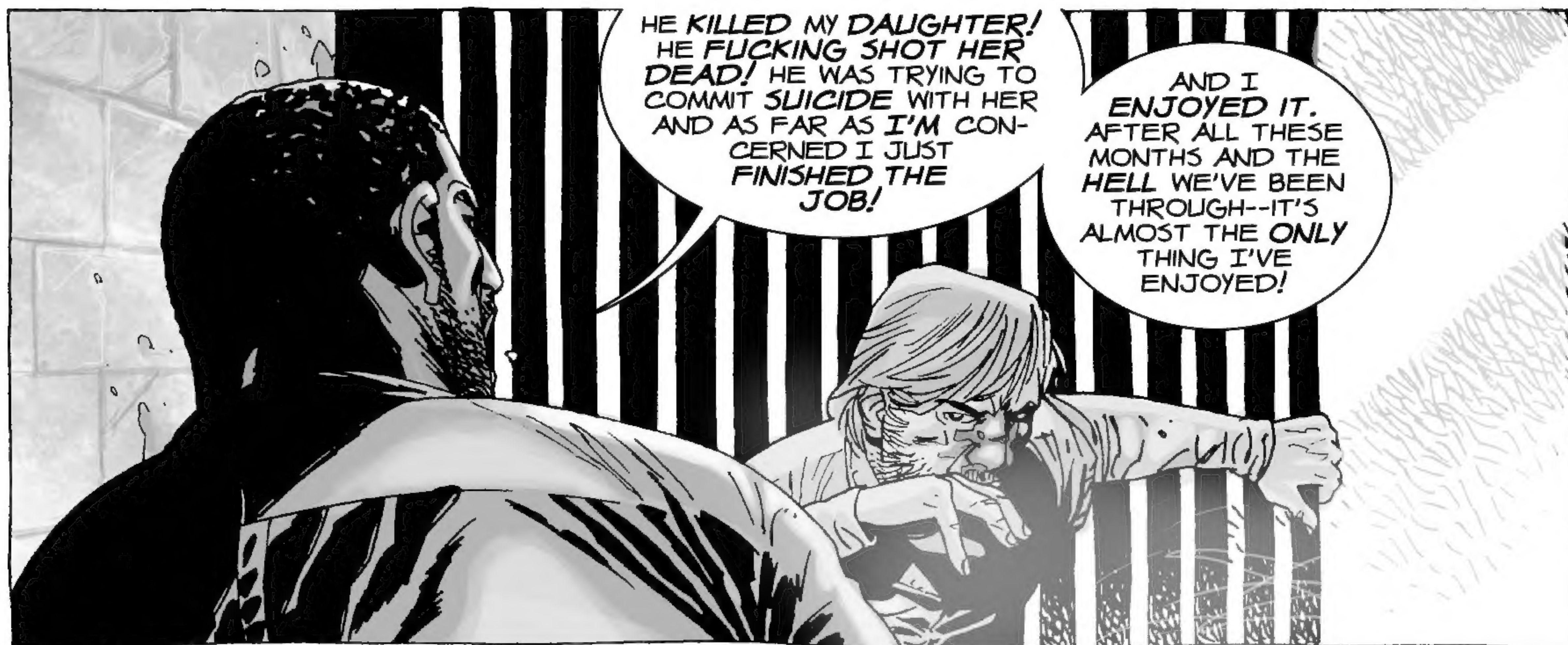
I RE-
MEMBER
EXACTLY
WHAT YOU
DID!!



YEAH--
I KILLED
CHRIS--
FINE--

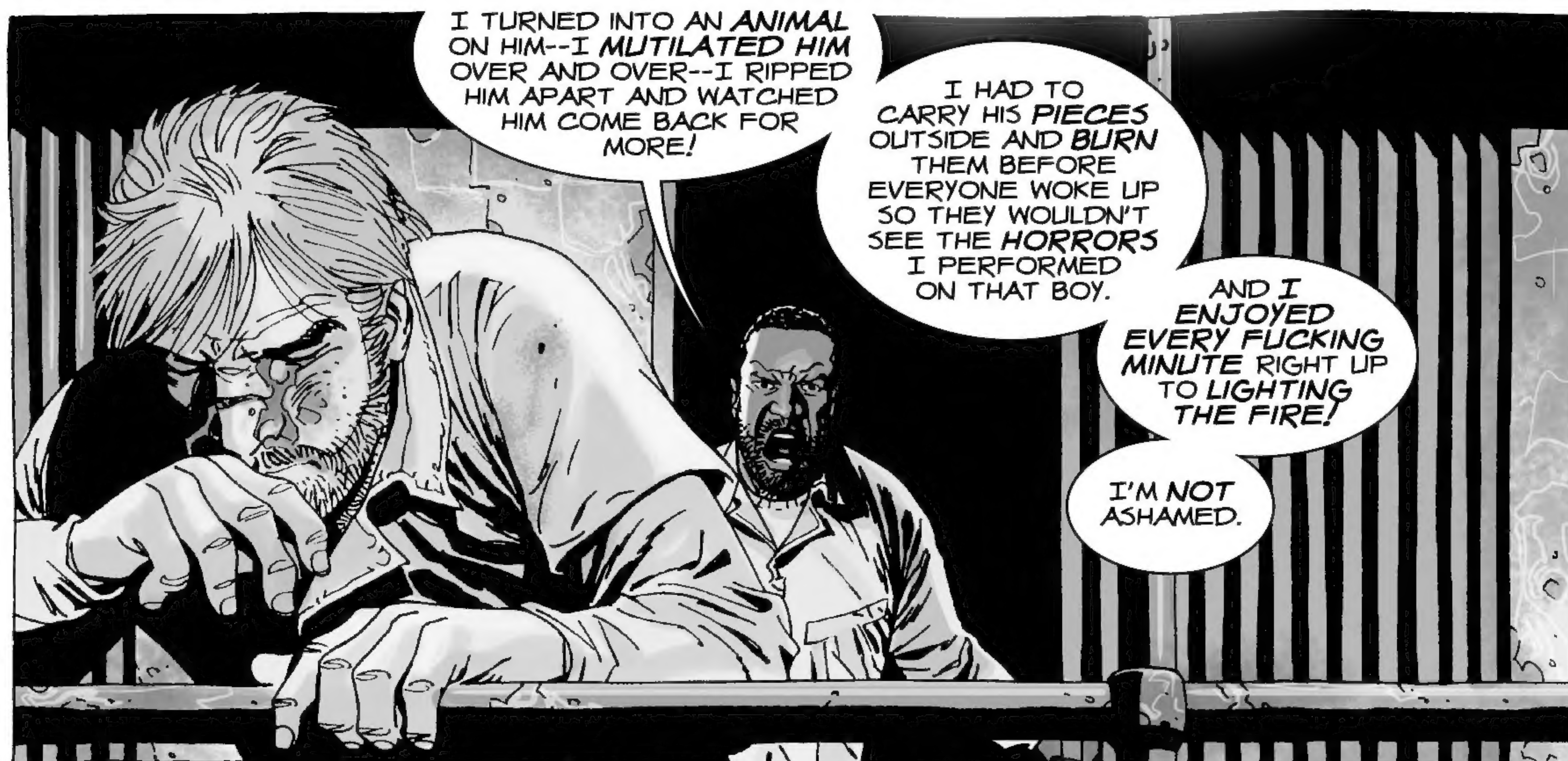
I
MURDERED
HIM IN COLD
BLOOD!





HE KILLED MY DAUGHTER!
HE **FUCKING** SHOT HER
DEAD! HE WAS TRYING TO
COMMIT **SUICIDE** WITH HER
AND AS FAR AS I'M CON-
CERNED I JUST
FINISHED THE
JOB!

AND I
ENJOYED IT.
AFTER ALL THESE
MONTHS AND THE
HELL WE'VE BEEN
THROUGH--IT'S
ALMOST THE **ONLY**
THING I'VE
ENJOYED!



I TURNED INTO AN **ANIMAL**
ON HIM--I **MUTILATED** HIM
OVER AND OVER--I **RIPPED**
HIM APART AND WATCHED
HIM COME BACK FOR
MORE!

I HAD TO
CARRY HIS **PIECES**
OUTSIDE AND **BURN**
THEM BEFORE
EVERYONE WOKE UP
SO THEY WOULDN'T
SEE THE **HORRORS**
I PERFORMED
ON THAT BOY.

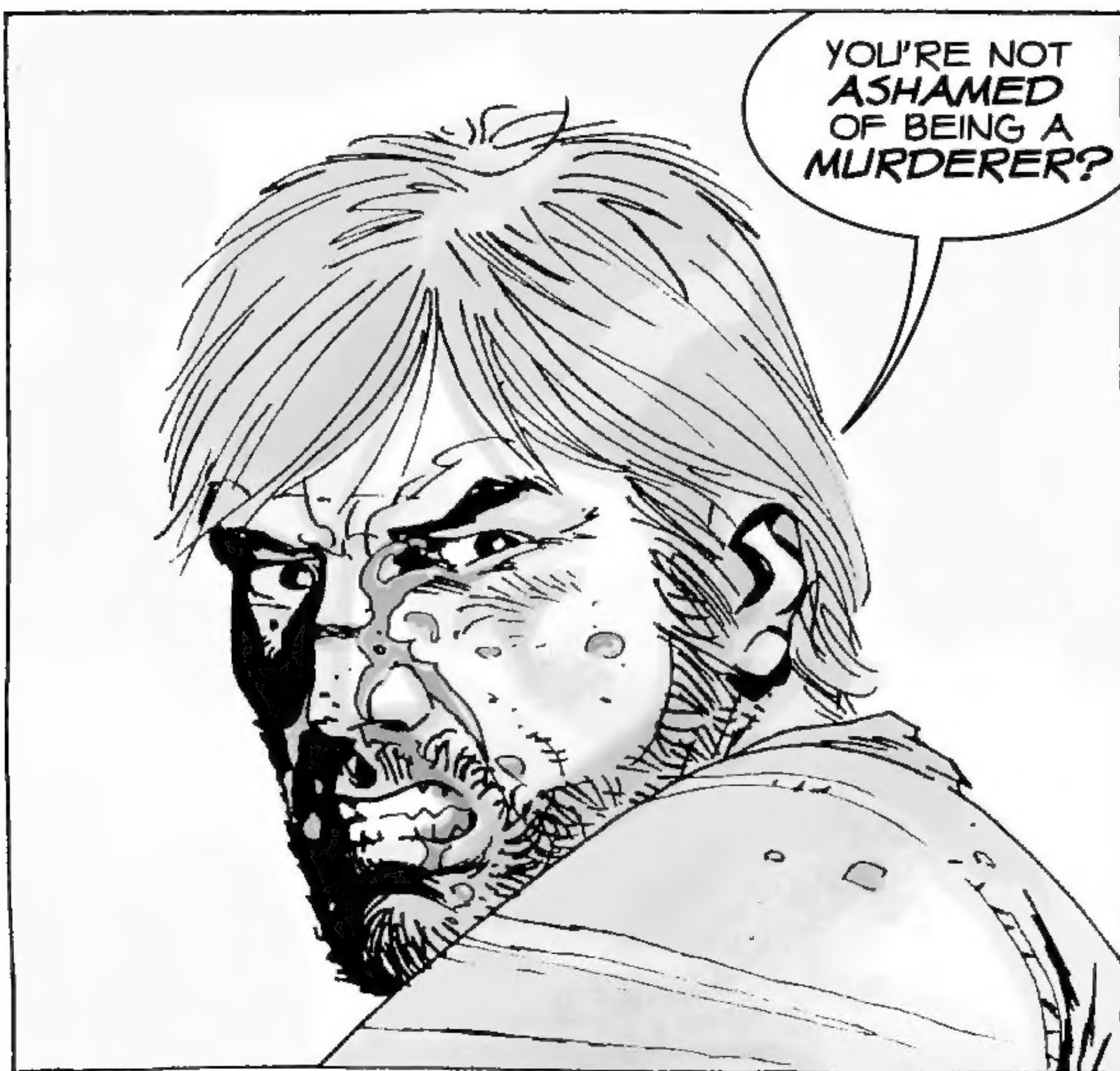
AND I
ENJOYED
EVERY FUCKING
MINUTE RIGHT UP
TO **LIGHTING**
THE FIRE!

I'M NOT
ASHAMED.



I'M NOT
ASHAMED!





YOU'RE NOT
ASHAMED
OF BEING A
MURDERER?



I KILLED FOR THE
RIGHT REASONS.
I MURDERED HIM,
YES--BUT IT WAS
JUSTIFIED.

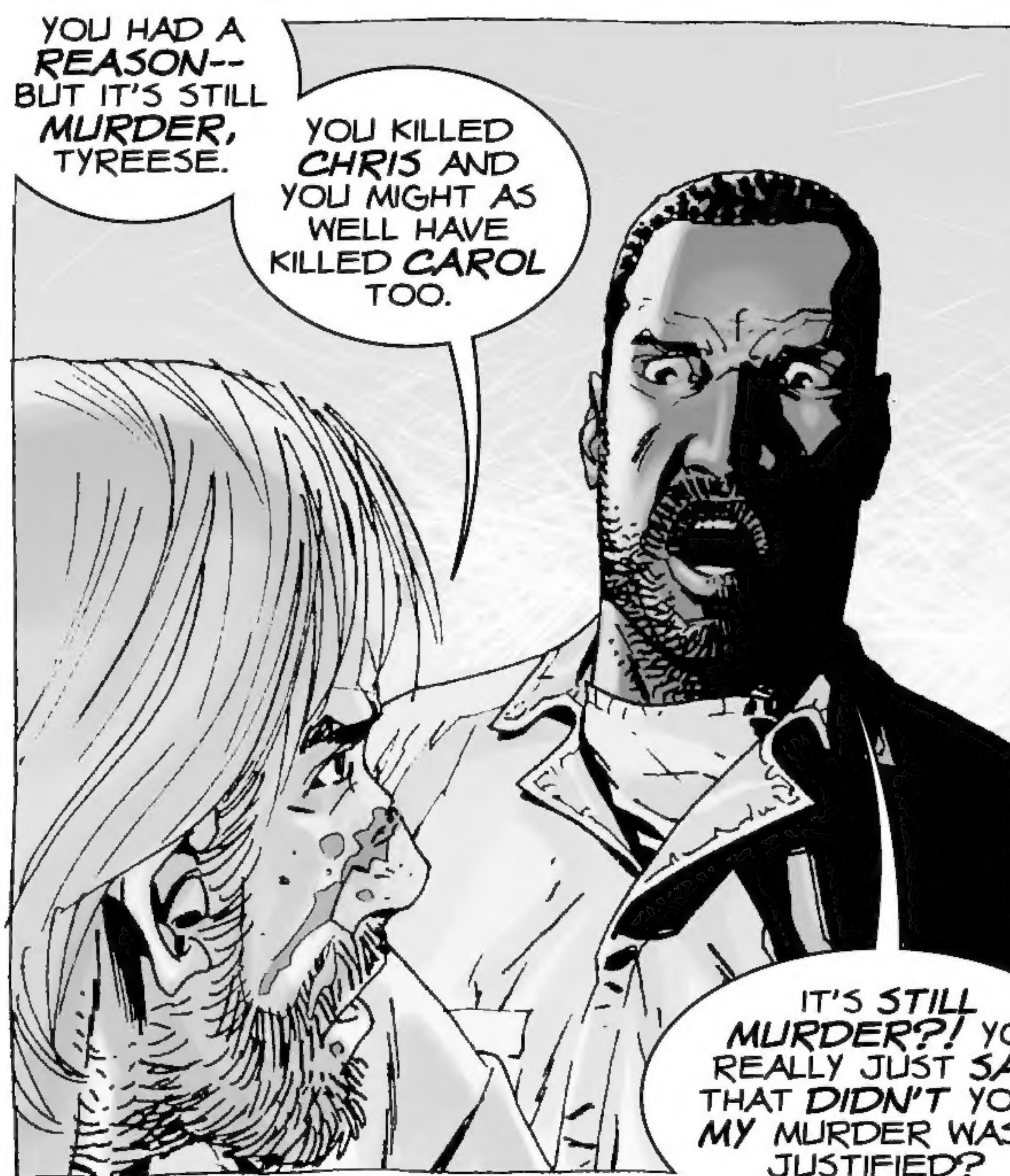
HE
KILLED MY
DAUGHTER,
FOR CHRIST'S
SAKE.



I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S
GOING ON BETWEEN YOU
TWO, BUT **PLEASE**--CALM
DOWN. SERIOUSLY, GUYS--
YOU'RE FRIENDS.
DON'T DO
THIS.

YOU GUYS
COULD **REALLY**
HURT EACH
OTHER.

YEAH, GUYS.
PLEASE... YOU'RE
GOING TO **REALLY**
REGRET
THIS.



YOU HAD A
REASON--
BUT IT'S STILL
MURDER,
TYREESE.

YOU KILLED
CHRIS AND
YOU MIGHT AS
WELL HAVE
KILLED **CAROL**
TOO.

IT'S STILL
MURDER?! YOU
REALLY JUST SAID
THAT **DIDN'T** YOU?!
MY MURDER WASN'T
JUSTIFIED?



BUT
YOURS
WAS?!

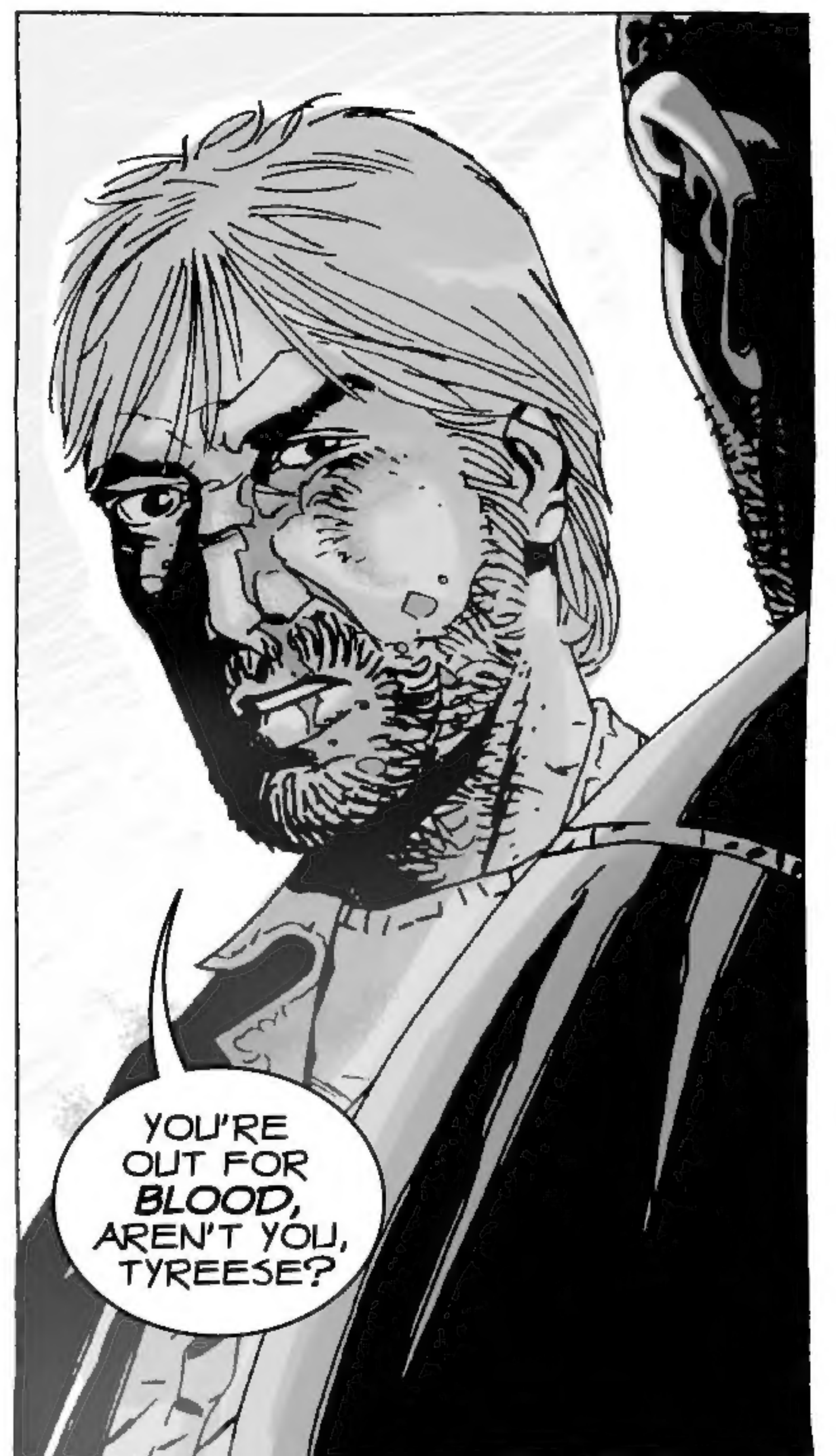


WHAT ABOUT
DEXTER?!

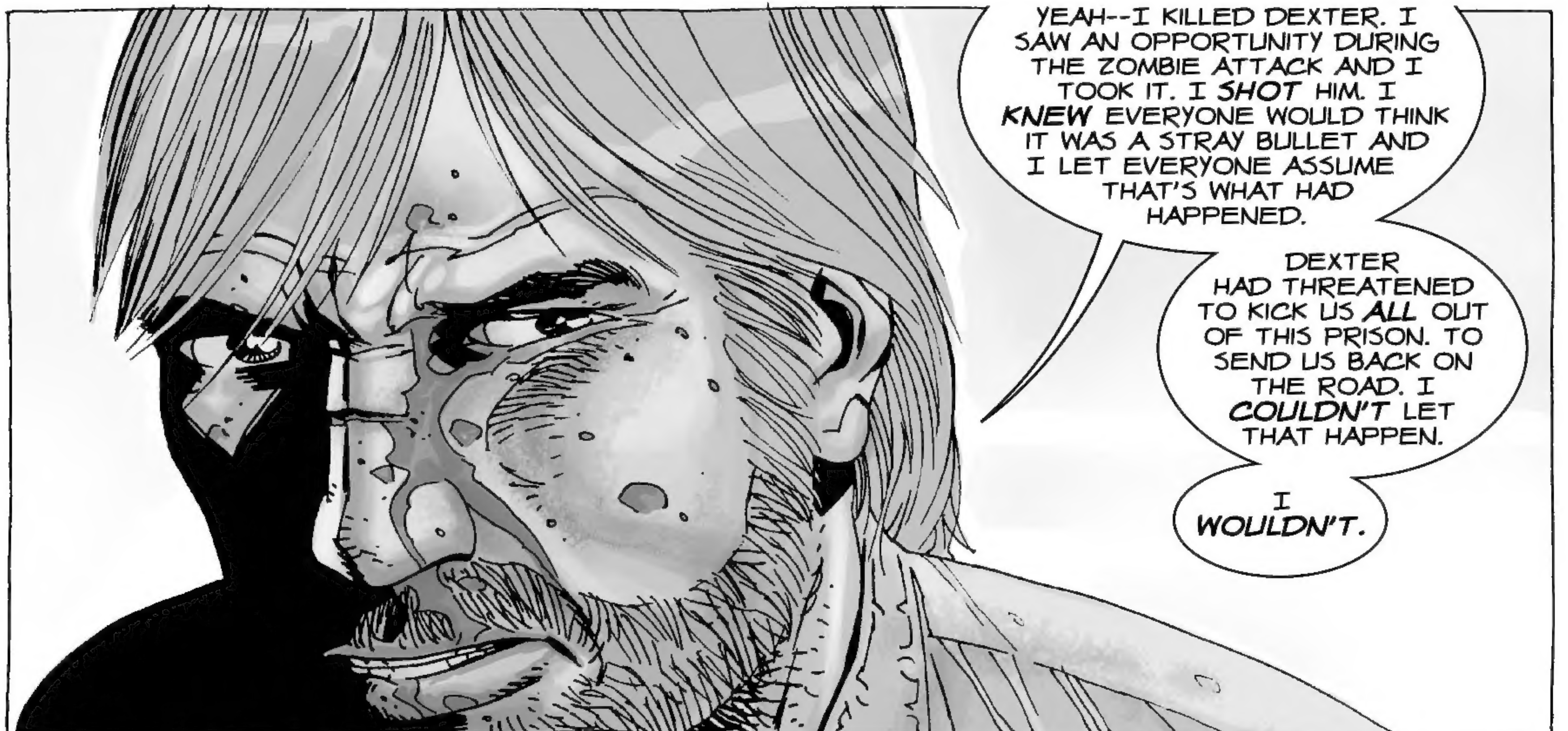
YOU WANT
TO **JUMP MY
SHIT?** LET'S
BRING ALL THE
SKELETONS
OUT OF THE
CLOSET!



WHAT'D
YOU **FORGET**
ABOUT THAT
ONE?



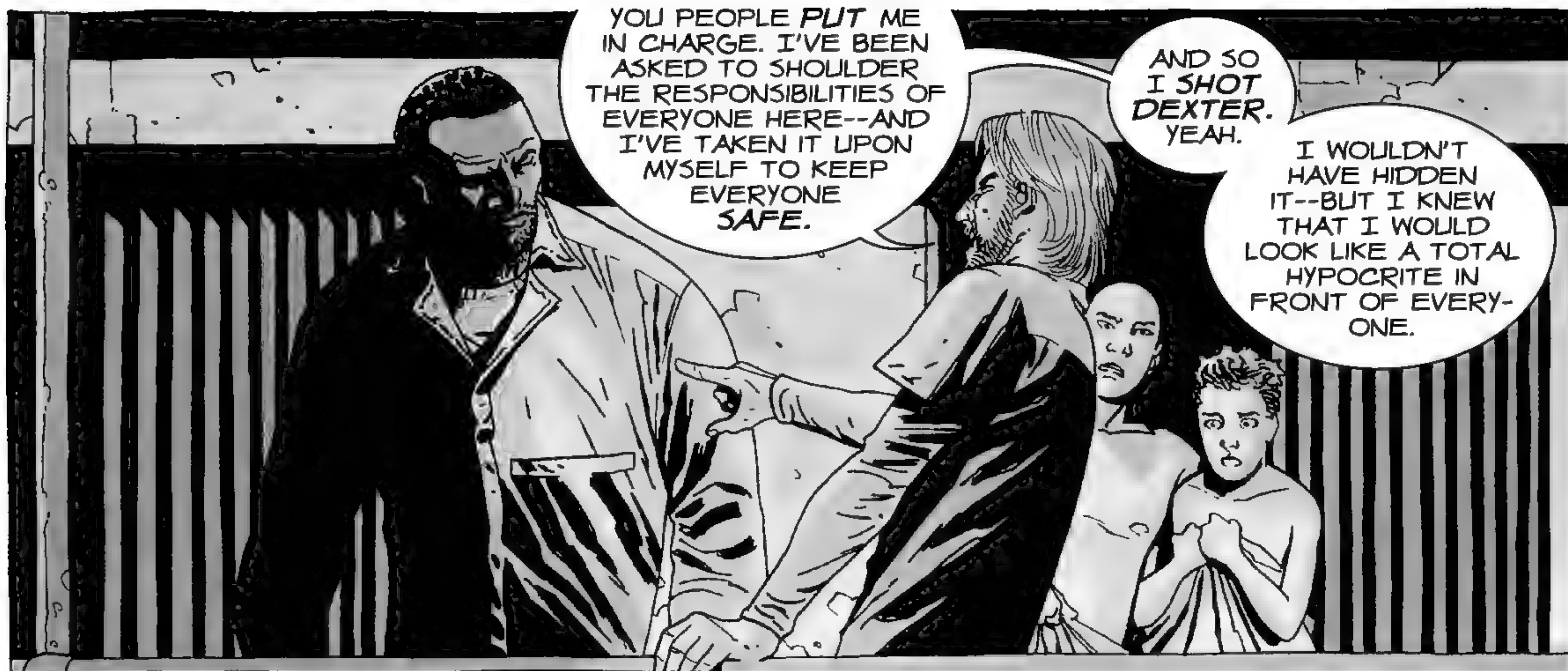
YOU'RE
OUT FOR
BLOOD,
AREN'T YOU,
TYREESE?



YEAH--I KILLED DEXTER. I
SAW AN OPPORTUNITY DURING
THE ZOMBIE ATTACK AND I
TOOK IT. I **SHOT** HIM. I
KNEW EVERYONE WOULD THINK
IT WAS A STRAY BULLET AND
I LET EVERYONE ASSUME
THAT'S WHAT HAD
HAPPENED.

DEXTER
HAD THREATENED
TO KICK US **ALL** OUT
OF THIS PRISON. TO
SEND US BACK ON
THE ROAD. I
COULDN'T LET
THAT HAPPEN.

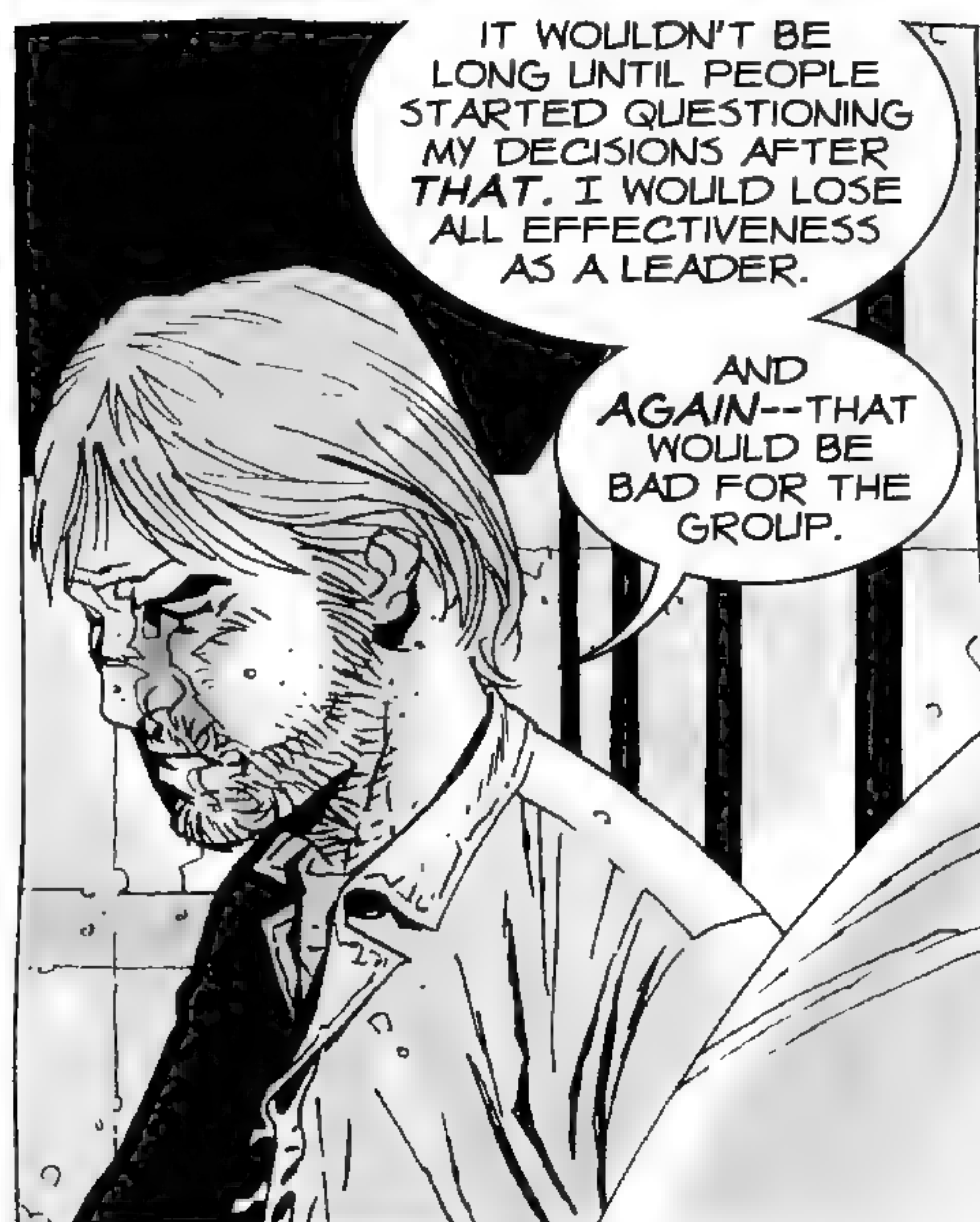
I
WOULDN'T.



YOU PEOPLE **PUT** ME
IN CHARGE. I'VE BEEN
ASKED TO SHOULDER
THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF
EVERYONE HERE--AND
I'VE TAKEN IT UPON
MYSELF TO KEEP
EVERYONE
SAFE.

AND SO
I **SHOT**
DEXTER.
YEAH.

I WOULDN'T
HAVE HIDDEN
IT--BUT I KNEW
THAT I WOULD
LOOK LIKE A TOTAL
HYPOCRITE IN
FRONT OF EVERY-
ONE.



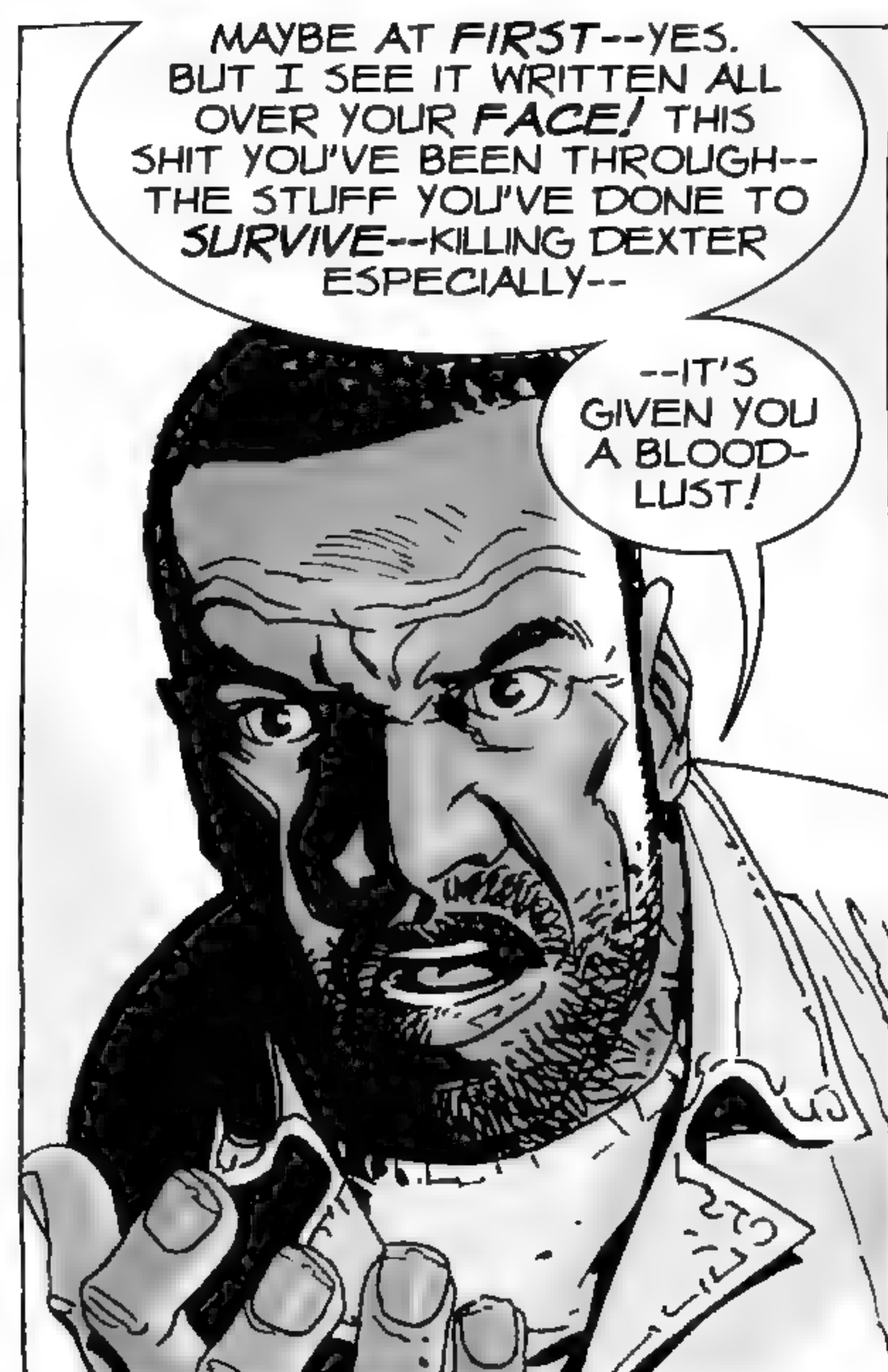
IT WOULDN'T BE
LONG UNTIL PEOPLE
STARTED QUESTIONING
MY DECISIONS AFTER
THAT. I WOULD LOSE
ALL EFFECTIVENESS
AS A LEADER.

AND
AGAIN--THAT
WOULD BE
BAD FOR THE
GROUP.



YOU HAD THE
GROUP'S BEST
INTERESTS IN
MIND?!

**BULL-
SHIT!**



MAYBE AT **FIRST--**YES.
BUT I SEE IT WRITTEN ALL
OVER YOUR **FACE!** THIS
SHIT YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH--
THE STUFF YOU'VE DONE TO
SURVIVE--KILLING DEXTER
ESPECIALLY--

--IT'S
GIVEN YOU
A BLOOD-
LUST!



YOU'RE STARTING TO
ENJOY THE THINGS YOU
DO. YOU'RE ALWAYS THE
FIRST ONE READY TO
ACT WHEN ANYTHING
GOES WRONG.

YOU
ENJOYED
IT!!



I'VE SEEN
IT IN YOUR **EYES--**
I SAW IT WHEN
YOU **MUTILATED**
ALLEN.







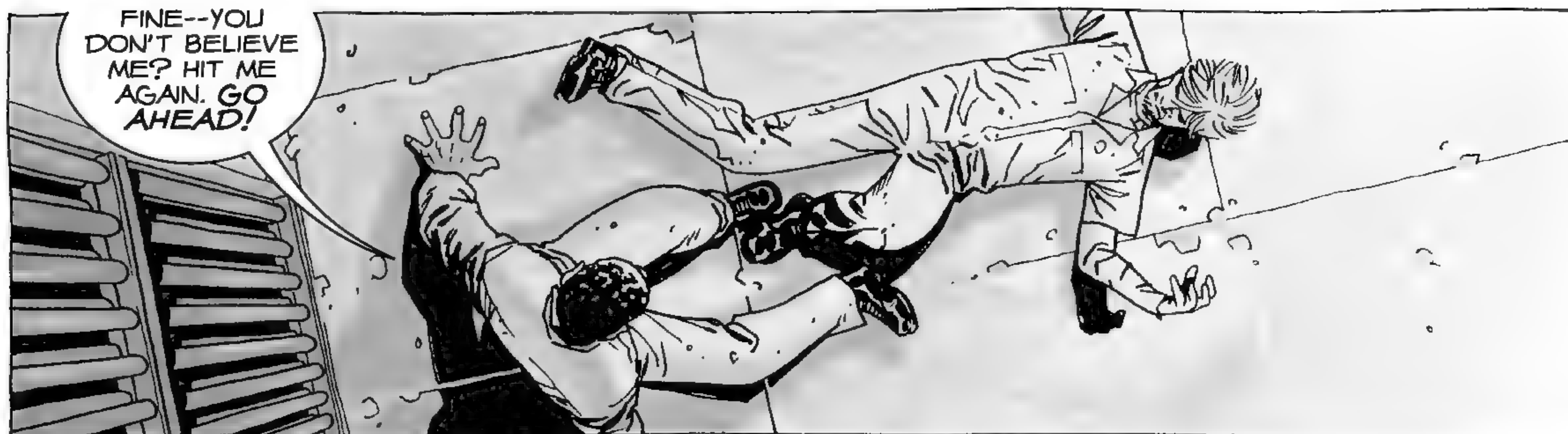
RICK!



WHUD!







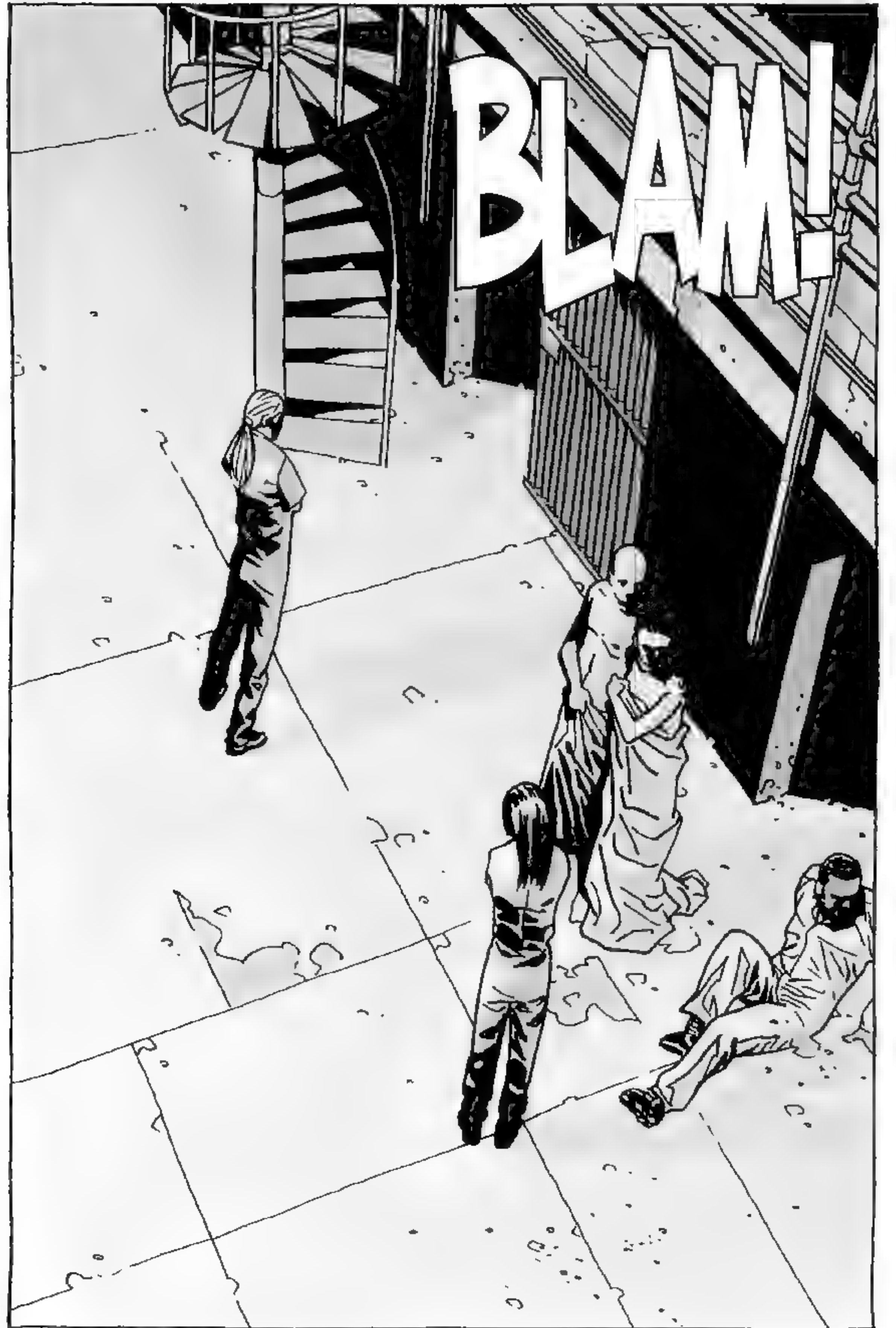
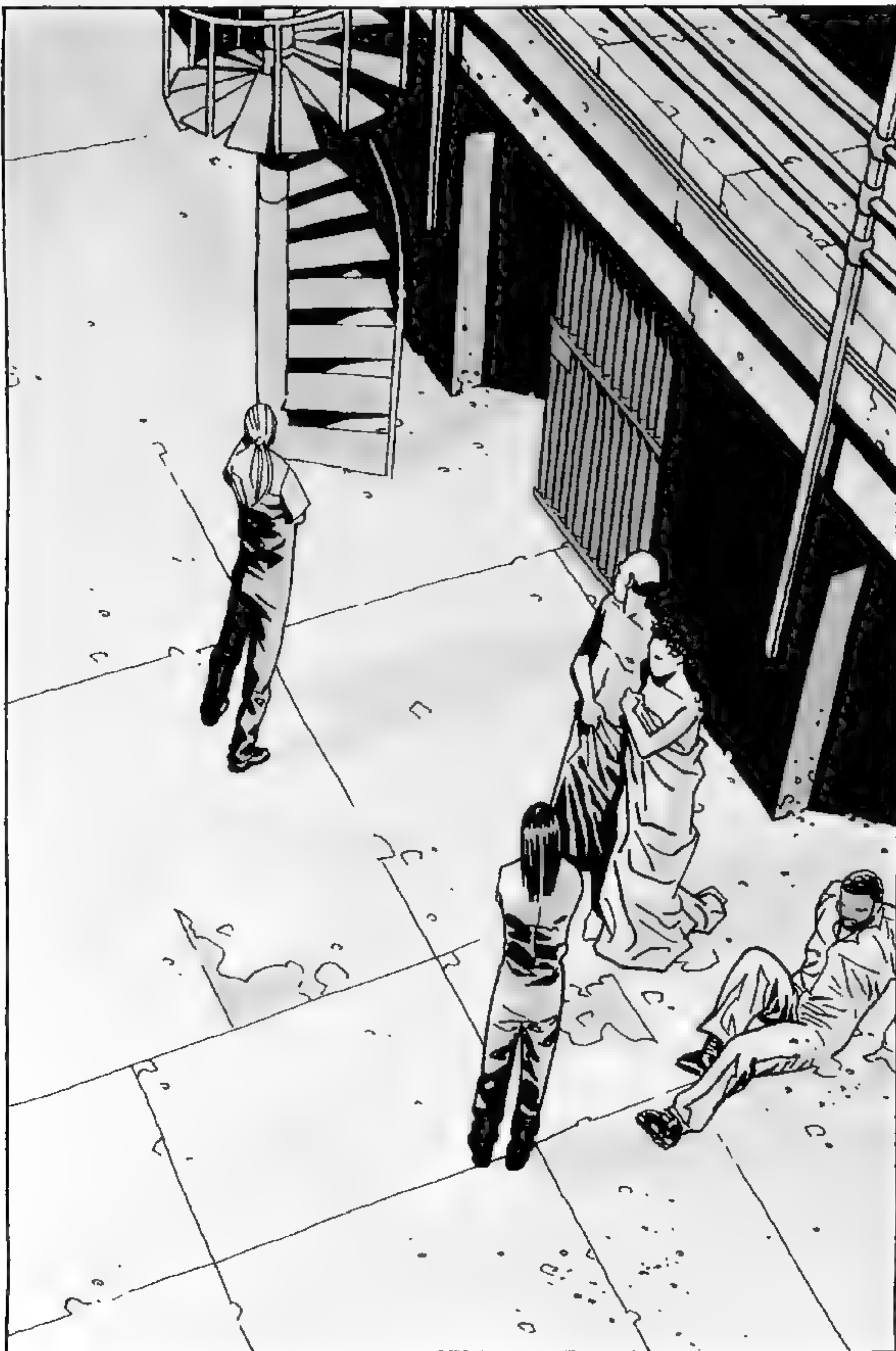
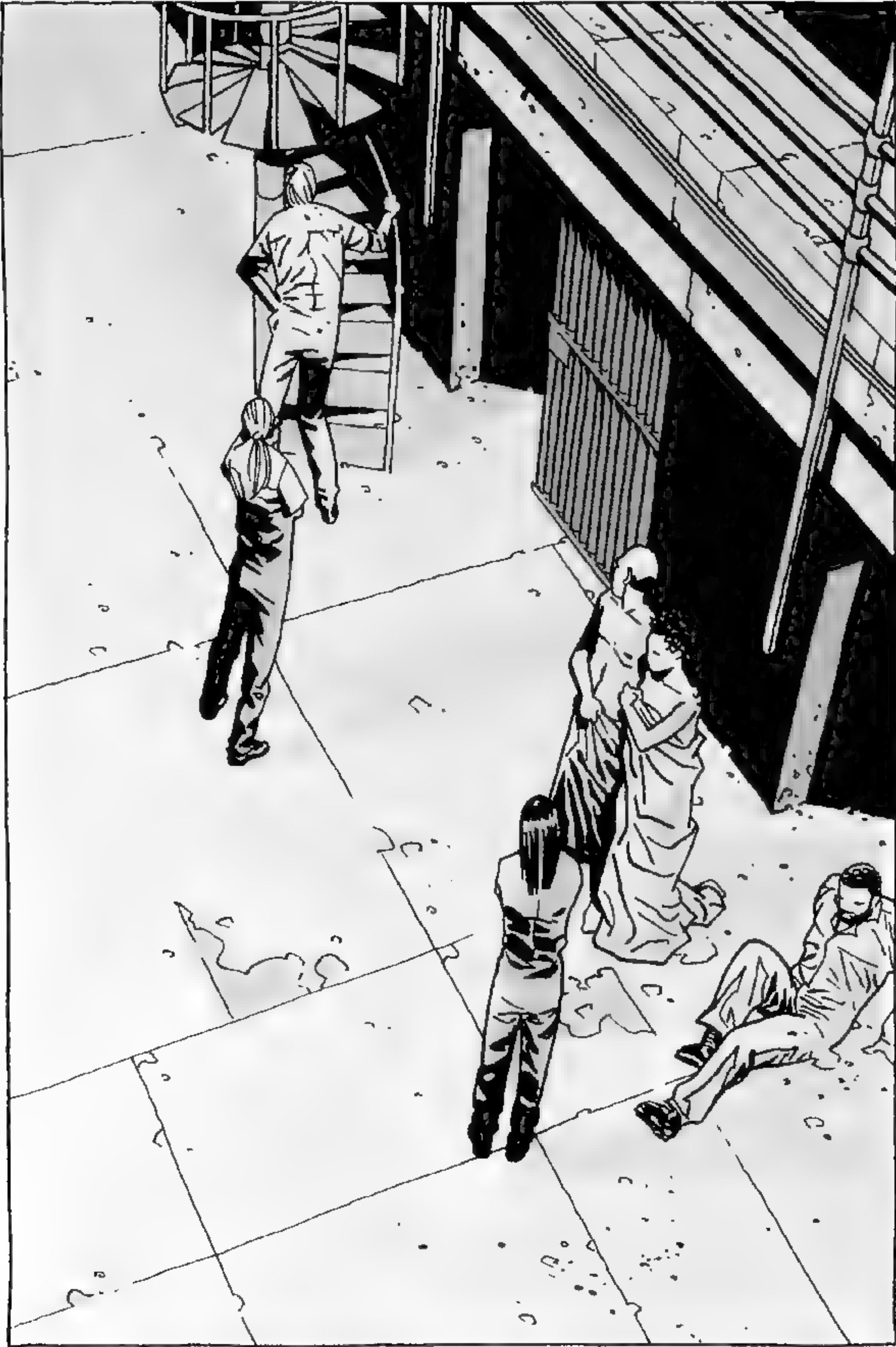




ALLEN IS
DEAD.









CAROL IS GOING TO BE FINE. SHE DIDN'T CUT DEEP AT ALL. SHE BARELY LOST ANY BLOOD.

FIGURED YOU COULD USE SOME GOOD NEWS.



MICHONNE HELPED ME PATCH HER UP. I COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT HER.

I GOT ENOUGH ON MY CONSCIENCE WITHOUT HAVING TO WORRY ABOUT SOME GIRL OFFING HERSELF BECAUSE I--WELL...



RICK, YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO DO IT. I KNOW YOU AND ALLEN WERE CLOSE. SOMEONE *ELSE* COULD HAVE DONE IT. I COULD HAVE--YOU DON'T HAVE TO CARRY THE WEIGHT OF US ALL ON YOUR SHOULDERS.



RICK?



RICK?

LETTER HACKS

WRITE TO US AT:

THE WALKING DEAD
C/O FUNK-O-TRON
P.O. BOX 54386
LEXINGTON, KY 40555-4386

OR

WALKINGDEAD@FUNKOTRON.COM

And like lightening here's issue 23. As you can see this issue shipped a mere two weeks after issue 22 and in another two weeks you'll see issue 24 on the shelves. We're trying to catch up on the schedule a bit and so these three issues are shipping in RAPID succession.

It's not the most idea of situations for retailers, I know... but we've got to get that hardcover out in time for Christmas so I'm hoping you people will be understanding in light of that.

Also, in an effort to get this book to the printer really quick-like we're going to be cutting the letters column back a bit (well, A LOT). We should be back to our regularly scheduled insanely long letters column next month, so don't worry.

Now, let's answer some letters, okay?

Once again, great issue. Who's Michonne talking to? I think she's talking to her dead boyfriend. She seems a lil' nutty like that. I mean, notice she didn't mention what she was up to with Tyreese? Never try to keep secrets from the voices in your head people! It'll only result in getting your ass killed... of course, head voice might have to take a number after Carol!

Wheeee! I just love all this soapy smut! But please, less naked Glenn, alright?

You can't have one without the other. Beggars can't be choosers y'know.

Sure hope Allen pulls through if for no other reason than to answer the question first posed (but never satisfactorily answered) in Day Of The Dead about whether or not severing the inflicted area of the body would save the victim. It'd also be great if he was bitter and resentful to Rick for cutting his leg off. Talk about your irony.

Anyway, great job once again all. I still don't like Rick much these days, but he really did pull a solid with Allen so I'm willing to reserve judgement for a bit longer.

Remembering to sign this time,
Darryl Etheridge

P.S. I don't remember ever reading what you thought of Land Of The Dead. Well?

Just read some past letters columns. I've talked about Land of the Dead about a billion times now and I'm NOT doing it again.

Sigh.

I liked it. I thought it was a good flick. I think the only reason it doesn't SEEM as strong as the other three is because we've all seen the other three nine thousand times and we're really grown to love

them. Also, I imagine the slightly longer director's cut will be better. It's certainly no Phantom Menace. I liked it. Tell your friends.

Dear TWD crew,

Issue #21 was fantastic! The whole team really pulls together to make the comic better than what you'd expect from the average comic. I like that Robert's writing is through the characters, not about them. Case in point: three of my favorite panels in the book happen on page 3 when Rick mutters "That's not how it works..." to himself while thinking of what to do. That's great. I tend to compare movies and comics a lot (both visual media) and that progression of those three panels is the sort of thing an actor would think to do, but probably wouldn't appear in the script that way. It shows the reader that you're really in the minds of the characters. Charlie, as usual, does a great job of showing shades of emotion in the characters' faces. I love that; it reinforces the ebb and flow of the story's emotional level. As for Cliff, I can imagine that for some it would be very limiting to only work in grey tones, but he continues to enhance the art to such a degree that I can imagine a plethora of colors in the characters' world.

I thought the Clive Barker quote from Andrew Garcia-Price was pretty neat. I had never thought about the zombie concept in that sort of way. I had always assumed that it was just a personification of the basic fear of death. Ya' know, death persuing the living, never tiring, never slacking. Death consuming the living. I guess that's why I tend to prefer "slow zombies" over their running brethren, because I feel it better embodies the slow but steady approach of death.

It's funny to read issue 21 and the stuff that happens with Michonne and then read the letters responding to issue 19 and all the people who were buzzing about her! I doubt any of them expected her to turn out to be some reality TV influenced nutjob! The last two pages were great, it totally captured that "video journal" thing that is the cornerstone of most reality TV. The whole thing seems to explain some of her actions as well: falling in line with the 'leader' (Rick); becoming a team player; and the stuff with Tyreese - making alliances with established 'players' based on sexual attraction? - total reality TV. I'm now interested in seeing whether she was always crazy or it was just the situation of the zombies that made her snap.

I think you're reading into things just a bit when you associate Michonne's character arc to reality TV. She wasn't so much doing a video journal as she was talking to someone I didn't want you to see. Don't sully this comic by comparing any part to reality

TV. It's insulting. Now, if you'll excuse me, Survivor is on tonight and I have popcorn to make.

Course, in a couple of issues you'll probably reveal that she was speaking into a microscopic camera to her government superiors or something like that and I'll be the one who looks crazy! ^_^

At any rate, keep up the stupendous work!
-Craig Dresser

Wait, GOVERNMENT SPIES!! MICROSCOPIC CAMERAS... that's not a bad idea... maybe she's working for the aliens.

Yo Robert Dude!

I had this dream last night where I was reading The Walking Dead issue 500 the cover was so kewl , Rick was standing on a pile of dead humans. Inside he was a zombie/cyborg working alongside an all grown up Duane, who seemed like a mad scientist. Only thing is they were taking out the humans. Wierd stuff man, please get out of my head! Oh by the way I saw "40 year old virgin" and you're famous now even more :) he was reading a copy of marvel team-up (#4 I think) with Iron Man & Hulk.I got wierd looks in the theatre when I raised my fist and screamed "KIRKMAN RULES" anyhoo if anyone else has any kirkman sightings out of the funnybooks please let me know!

Rob Steal

I don't want to alarm you in regards to your "dream" but what you were actually seeing was a little thing I like to call "the future." Have I blown your mind yet? No? Well what if I was to say that was actually issue FIFTY!

Yeah, I know. I'll give you a minute.

Dear Walking Dead,

Before I say anything, I'd like to say thanks for printing my letter in issue 20, no one has ever printed something I wrote, so thanks.

With that said, the idea of having the bite kill a person, but not turn a person, has got to be one of my favorite ideas you've had and adds a fresh twist on the zombie genre once bitten rule. And I loved the panels when Rick figured it out, props to Adlard on his spot on art. I also feel extremely bad for carol, I didn't think I'd give a shit, but there ya have it. Your storytelling is so good I actually care about all the characters. Cept Otis, I did at first, but after that nigger comment, he can get torn to bits for all I care. I mean even after being saved by Michonne and realizing that Tyresse might be the one of the few people he'll know for the rest of his life you'd think he'd drop the racist thing.

You'd think... but apparently he's just a shit head.

That said I love where the book is going, I love that it's a people story with zombies, not the other way around. And most importantly, I love that its a never ending story, I mean if the book last that long, we could see Carl grow up in to one bad ass survivor, cowboy hat and his daddy's axe. Just saying it'd be really fucking awesome.

I don't know if we'll be around THAT long but I'd certainly dig it if we were.

Finally, in my last letter, I realized I didn't name, the comic book store I go to every Wednesday, Cosmix (in Montreal QC) and that made me feel like an asshole cuz the owners are fucking great, had they not suggested the book, I'd have never ever read it. Which would have been a real shame.

Sincerely,
Jon Maggio

p.s. seing most everyone get to plug something can I plug my own website www.jonmaggio.com

Thanks for the fine read again.

Y'know, technically you're getting to plug TWO things. Your comic shop and your website. The way I see it that's just not fair so I think I'm going to delete the plug for your website.

So does Image have a new rule that every Kirkman book has to be released on the same day every month? Two months in a row Invincible and TWD have come out the same day, and this week Battle Pope was added to the mix. Not that I'm complaining. Getting a nice big chunk of Kirkman once a month isn't a bad thing by any means. And at least I've got MTU to fill the gap.

Well, that's my fault. I seem to turn the books in on the same week. For some reason it always seems like the letters columns, lettered pages, and coloring for all the books ends up getting completed at the same time. It's weird.

About issue 21: 6 panels of "THUNKS!!"? Damn! I can't help but wonder if someone's going to make an artificial foot for Allen (if he survives, that is), or if he's just going to have to hobble around the prison yard. How would you even go about making a foot? I guess Herschel would probably be able to fix something up. Why am I so concerned about this? I'm glad you're featuring Axel more now. He seems really interesting to me for some reason. Maybe it's because he looks like Santa.

While reading the letter column to 21 it appears everyone wants posters. Well, when I was at WWC, Tony was selling large-sized prints of his TWD covers...why not just market them? I only had the cash to get one (issue 17), but I'm already hoping I'll be able to get a couple more next year.

There will be a full-sized, full color poster available early 2006. How's that for service?

Speaking of WWC, while I was at your booth, I was trying to decide what to buy of yours (seeing as how I already had all of Invincible and TWD, my choices were limited), one of the guys working there actually talked me out of buying Cloudfall or Brit (it was Sunday and I was low on cash, so I could only get one) in favor of Tales from the Bully Pulpit. Considering you call it "one of the best comics ever made" on the back cover, you might not be that upset, but that's seven dollars I didn't spend on your stuff. Long story short: make sure the guys working the booth next year only try to sell your stuff.

Hmmm. Looks like I may need to have a talk with young Benito Cereno.

One last thing...thanks to TWD I have my first official "comics friend" after reading for more than ten years. Sure, every week I have to listen to him say "Damn, when are we going to get a new issue of Walking Dead?!" but it's worth it. Thanks for that.

Aaron Stege

Well, you and your new friends will be happy to know that I'm currently working on the letters column for the next issue RIGHT THIS MINUTE. It'll be in stores before you know.

Brave Sir Kirkman,

Ahh...late night letter writing. What a better time? I forgot everything I wanted to write. I guess I'll wing it. By the numbers...

1. I am quite pleased that I'll be picking up issue 22 on my birthday in September. I'll be 22, as well... Luckily I age by years while you remain faithful to the monthly system.

Yeah, 22 in September... uh... sorry about that.

2. I am a huge fan of your book and it gave me faith that monsters have awesome stories and not just blood and guts for entertainment.

21. The cover to issue 21 is one of my favorite comic covers of all time. The butterfly is what did it for me.

C. I'm done numbering.

About 2 months after I read the first collection of TWD and had a Romero-thon with my friends over winter break I made a decision. Perhaps life altering. See, I have wanted to be a filmmaker ever since I saw Superman when I was four. Lately, with the drudgery of college bringing me down I thought I ought to just go for it and make a movie. With some influence from TWD and Romero I decided to do a zombie film. With heart. And brains. My plans for the film were to get some recognition and hopefully (beyond hope) get a chance to say "I could direct TWD should it be transferred to film and played on a certain home box office network" (which, to get the full story in, would be the best medium in my opinion). And as soon as I began scripting my flick I heard TWD might get made before I do. I was devastated. But not devastated enough to give up. I will hopefully start filming my zombie flick in late November and if I can cut it together quick enough maybe, just maybe, it might get noticed and give me a little film cred. Even if I don't, this is one book I'd love to see faithfully adapted to film. Keep up the great work on the page and I'll keep spending money to read your books (all of them) even though I work at my comic shop and could just as easily read for free.

Yeah, who knows IF Walking Dead will ever get adapted to TV or film. I'm not losing any sleep over it. I'm happy to focus on the comic.

This ramble.is over,
Sam Whitewater

P.S. What is with the alien invasion discussions? I only started reading the last couple of letter columns (can't find all the back issues) and I must have missed something. That's just what I need, zombies and aliens. Together. If that happens, I have to see a zombie and an alien holding hands and skipping through fields of dead bodies. That would be an awesome visual...

It's pretty much public knowledge that this book is going to "jump the shark" at some point after issue 75. That's when I'm going to start throwing in aliens for no damn reason. It's a running joke here in the letters column. Thanks for playing.

Dear Kirkman,

So right off the bat I ask to be a zombie and get turned down, now you tell a guy that you'll think about it. Just kill off Glenn. That's pretty much me...

Oh, and good job with the bite just killing them, not infecting them. I think we talked about this before, but a lot of people are confused about this. Everyone is infected already! Awesome Day of the Dead moment in issue 21 by the way! I expected them to cauterize the wound, but I like the way you handled it.

I did so much research for that I think I could successfully amputate a limb at this point. I'm glad you liked it.

Can't wait until issue 25! Here's to seeing a guy get carried off and feasted upon by zombies, leaving only his severed arm squeezed within the blood-pressure monitoring device! Or something equally cool.

I'm dying to have a blond pregnant woman and a black police officer land a helicopter on the prison roof or something. It's sooooo tempting.

Questions:

1. Will 25 be a big deal in this book? (I ask this thinking to myself that every new issue of a non-canceled comic involving

zombies is a big deal)

25 will just be another issue. It's regular-sized and regular-priced... there's some cool stuff planned, but I try to do that EVERY issue.

2. How much did you love Land of the Dead? There are lots of haters out there.

See above.

3. What did you like most about it? Other than sequel possibilities.

I honestly think it had the best, most likeable characters out of any of the Romero films... and they all lived, which makes for GREAT sequel possibilities.

4. Did you know that the word "Zombie" (as referring to "a soulless corpse said to have been revived by witchcraft" formerly, "the name of a snake-deity in voodoo cults of or deriving from West Africa and Haiti.") was first recognized in writing in 1872 by Schele de Vere in "Americanisms"? It described, "Zombi, a phantom or a ghost, not unfrequently heard in the Southern States in nurseries and among the servants." Neat huh...

Now I know, and knowing is half the battle...

5. Did you SEE Zombie King #0!

Frank sent me pages before it even came out. I saw the cow before anyone else. Lucky me... I guess. Neat book. I wish Frank would do more.

So maybe the guy to win the Make-Me-A-Zombie contest could be the guy with the most printed letters (unless Piers wins...damn that guy).

Love,
Chris Pitts

I think you'll be happy to know that you're slowly edging Piers out in the most-letters-printed category. That fucker must have gotten too busy or something.

Robert,

Good afternoon. First, I would like to say that I have been reading comics since 1989 and never felt compelled to write to a writer/ comic letter column until now.

I have been onboard Walking Dead since issue #3. A friend of mine had turned me on to it. Since I'm always looking for a good read, I took his advice and haven't regretted it. I even sought out your other works. Invincible and Marvel Team-up are very good solid reads, but it's TWD I look forward to every month. Even when Tony stopped doing the interiors, I wanted to stop getting it, that's how fond I was of the way he drew these characters. But I found that the writing was so good that it kept me hooked. Tell Charlie that I have since come to love his work as well.

Tony Who?

You have become one of the great writers working in comics today. My problem with Issue #21 is this, The last few pages are so predictable. I saw this BJ with Michonne and Tyreese coming a mile away. I'm not saying this to sound like a literary expert on story construction, it's just that I thought you would go somewhere else with it. I didn't expect you to play it safe and go for the cheap mass audience thrill.

What gave it away? The fact that the cover for issue 22 with them KISSING was online months ago? Or did you actually see it coming in the story? I'll try to keep the covers a little less spoiler-filled from now on.

I was going to wait until Issue #22 came out before I sent this, but I came to the conclusion that there is no way for you to undo what's been done.

Hit me back
Clyde in NJ

It's all leading to something. Don't sweat it.

Robert,

I'VE GOT A VERY BAD FEELING ABOUT LORI'S BABY...

You've stated that the origin of the malady will not be a storyline, although in Issue 21 it's nature and infectious nature got me thinking. If Lori's baby is "born dead" (gulp) what would happen or even more horrific, if the baby perishes in utero and then...

...well you get the picture unless that's part of the plan.

I'm not ruling anything out--but chances are if it happened in the Dawn of the Dead remake it's not going to happen here.

I've been a comic fanboy for close to 40 years and truly thought there was no new concepts. I also thought it seldom that my emotions run high with comics, and long to 'feel something' (although I'm not gonna take it up the ass from Luke Cage, like Jessica Jones in Alias when she wanted to 'feel something').

WHAT?!

With Walking Dead AND yourself, both have occurred - a bold new concept with genuine shudders and creeps. You also convey the love of comics and comic fanboys, as I'm still amazed with ALL the letters you print and commentary.

Except for THIS issue, right? Everyone's going to HATE me and think I'm an asshole after THIS issue. Man, you guys are so quick to turn on a guy.

Loyalty goes both ways - I since picked up all your past work, just gotta get Tech Jacket.

Thanks again - hope I'm wrong about the baby, as that would hit rival Ennis for comic shocks.

John Panno

Or, y'know... it WOULD have if you hadn't given it away in the GODDAMN LETTERS COLUMN. Jerk.

Kirkman and Co.:

Just dropping you another letter to say how much I'm loving the ride so far. The Walking Dead continues month after month (give or take...) to be the best thing in print. Consistently, issue after issue, you put out a comic that is better than the one before it with no signs of slowing. In my previous letter to you printed in Issue #12's Letter Hacks, I (Who have been a HUGE fan of the zombie genre for the last half of my life) told you that I prefer the Walking Dead to any of Romero's works. While you pretty much said that I was a blasphemer, I still stand by my statement- Night of the Living Dead, Dawn of the Dead and Day of the Dead are three of my favorite movies in my collection, and yet, I'd take the run of The Walking Dead over them nine times out of ten. As such, I'm glad I was able to provide you with the "highest compliment paid to you"... You deserve it, man. Your book kicks mucho ass.

I still think if those movies were 24 hours long each you'd change your mind in a second. I just have more time to play with here--that's the only difference. Thanks again, though... it means a lot that you think so.

I've read through the entire run of the series (from issue #1 through whatever happens to be the latest issue at the time) going on ten or so times now, and by the sounds of a lot of the other fans sounding off in Letter Hacks, I'm not the only one. The Walking Dead pulls you in and doesn't stop to twist, holding your attention the entire time, every time through. Everyone I know that I've introduced to the series has read it through in one go, reading as much of it as they can. Then, when they're finished, the question I tend to hear the most is "Is this all you've got?"

There was a point where I was lending my Walking Dead

trades out to as many people as I could get to read them... at one point, a new issue was being passed through eleven hands... Then, I decided that they would have to start paying up in order to keep reading. I've even offered to pick up the issue for them as most of them likely haven't ever stepped foot in a comic store. You deserve the cash for the perfect, perfect book you've provided us with.

Wow, man--you're an all right guy. Really.

Speaking of buying your stuff, put me down as another vote in favor of Posters... I'd be all over a Walking Dead poster! By the sounds of it, the cover of Issue #9 seems to be the popular vote (and I tend to agree- it's my favorite cover thus far) but an original Tony Moore piece done especially for the poster would kick mucho ass as well. I'm also looking forward to December's Walking Dead hardcover volume and whatever goodies you're going to include in it... I can't wait! While you're at it, make any other Walking Dead crap you can get out there... t-shirts, action figures, decorative toilet lid covers- If it's Walking Dead, I'll buy it. (I guess I'm just a consumer whore...)

I'll be getting right on those decorative toilet lid covers. I can't WAIT!

It's good to see that the books are getting back on time... while I don't REALLY mind the delays (I used to read Battle Chasers), I still find myself getting anxious waiting for the next issue to find out what crazy twists you're going to unleash on Rick and the rest of the crew. It's also good to see that sales keep climbing... It's only a matter of time before HBO starts knocking on your door to produce a Walking Dead ongoing TV series... (Fingers crossed...)

Issue 21, as always, set the bar for the series even higher... How the hell do you do it, man? The scene with Carl and Sophia is one of the best the book has had to offer thus far (and that says a lot). It's stuff like this that make your book stand out from everything else zombie related. Brilliant, man... simply brilliant.

I'm digging Michonne so far, but like the rest of the fans, I'm dying to know her back story... It'll also sweet to see her in combat when push comes to shove. She seems like she'll be pretty cool in a combat situation. Cool twist on her at the end of Issue 21... I wonder just who it is that she thinks she's "conversing" with... Having her pursue Tyreese is a sweet play, too. A nice "soap opera" addition to the story with Carol catching a glimpse of Michonne helping Tyreese "let off some steam". By the looks of next month's cover, Michonne's just starting to stir things in the jail up too... Very nice.

If not a bit predictable...

The only thing that I question from Issue 21 is the fact that Axel is armed...

I know he's the only prisoner left and hasn't shown any signs of untrustworthiness but I didn't think that Rick and the rest of the group would take any chances after what went down with Dexter. I'm also surprised to see that the group is giving Patricia as many freedoms as she's getting after issues 18 and 19... In a situation such is theirs, you shouldn't get many chances.

Honestly what are they going to do? Lock her up and baby-sit her? It's not an ideal situation and they're making due. I doubt they'll be giving her a gun anytime soon.

Also, I'm going to take a shot in the dark and say either Glenn or Maggie is going to bite it soon... They seem to have a good thing going, and good things never last long in a world ruled by zombies. Also, I assume Billy is going to be zombie fodder soon enough as he really hasn't done much thus far... Ben and the other Billy (see, you already have too many Billys... kill one off) haven't really had much of a part in the story yet, either, and it'd be nice to see them used in some way, if only to feed the ranks of the living dead.

I would also like to commend you on your letters column, as not enough comics maintain them nowadays... It's nice to see you taking the time to answer the large amount of letters you get in a given month seeing as you're writing like fifty or

so books in a month. Another testament to how great the book is, is the very small amount of hate mail you've managed to receive, despite the open call for it. You even went as far as saying that a negative letter is guaranteed to see print and still, nothing. That said, um, kiss my ass or something... (Is that enough to have this letter see print?)

Oh, one thing I've been meaning to ask- Will the alternate version of Issue 10's cover ever see print in any way, shape or form? (You know, the one that I keep seeing online, with Rick with an axe in his hand, covered in blood, with the blanket wrapped around him? I'm pretty sure it's Mr. Adlard's art but it's hard to tell...) If it's an available variant, you must tell me where I can track one down... Every possible issue of Walking Dead must be mine! (Again, I'm a consumer whore...)

That cover is going to be used for THE WALKING DEAD SCRIPTBOOK which will be out a week or so after this issue. Buy at your own risk, though--it's got NO PICTURES. It's 40 pages for \$3.99, ask for it by name. Also, that cover is by Cliff, not Charlie.

I guess that's enough of MY ass kissing for now... Please, keep up the good work. I'll be with this book as long as you're putting it out- and that's a promise.

Corey Janson

PS- I'm also REALLY loving Invincible, too. It's great to see the diversity of work you have hitting the market. I only read it in trades, however, so the wait time in between sucks... Nonetheless, I can't wait to see what you have in store for that book as well. (Okay, NOW I'm done ass kissing)

Well, if you hate waiting for the trades, I've got an idea--BUY THE SINGLE ISSUES!! They've got letters columns, pin-ups, back-ups and all kinds of cool stuff.

The new woman was cool with the sword up until she started talking to no one in the jail cell. I think Rick might want to keep her locked up at night for a little longer! Lori is going to cheat on Rick again with that woman... freak! Love the book and can't wait for the next team-up book---loved spider-man's comments and punisher taking the finger off! Also cannot wait for Invincible and Spider-man's team-up soon!

Bobby W. Chamberlain

Yeah, man... the Invincible/Spider-Man Team-Up issue is going to be OFF THE HOOK, YO! I highly recommend seeking it out.

Robert,
You are terrible. (Maybe that will get this printed. You said negativity is a plus). Now that your status as a human being is out of the way, I would like to comment about your alien book "The Walking Dead".

1) #21 had my favorite cover thus far. The impending danger of the kids walking into an onslaught of zombies was a nice little bit of suspense. Adlard has a very eye catching cover style that has not been seen since those Fabry Preacher covers that I loved so much. There's not been a boring one in the bunch so far.

Yeah, Adlard's doing so GREAT covers... they get so much better starting with issue 25, though. You guys are going to be blown away. (wink!)

2) Allen is my favorite character. He is by far the most noble and is the driving force behind the book. Allen is a born leader and if I were female I would want to bear his children. Go Allen! All sarcasm aside, I do like the way that you have used this character to demonstrate how I believe that 99% of people would react to this whole situation. Granted, he's a whiny little bitch, but I believe that the realism that he brings to the table justifies his existence.

Allen is one of my favorite characters in the book. I promise.

3) Some of these people seem pretty damn comfortable. I am assuming that you will not have this level of comfort last much longer. I crave (brains) a full-scale invasion by the zombies in the worst way and I hope you deliver soon (brains). I'm talking massive deaths and thousands of zombies raining from (brains) the heavens. There's a reason that almost everyone is dead, and there is no way that those fences are going to hold when thousands of zombies are pushing against them. You write entertaining dialogue, so an issue where everyone learns to farm properly might be okay, but massive zombie attack might be fun too. Just a though. You think it over and get back to me.(damn sarcasm again... brains...)

You've read this comic before right? Now... which one would I choose? A boring issue-long story where the characters talk about stuff and learn to farm or a non-stop action romp where zombies invade and kill everyone? I gotta say, I'm going for the talking issue 9 times out of 10. All joking aside, you guys won't be longing for zombie action much longer... you're about to get your fill... in a few issues. Stay tuned.

Questions....

1) Michonne is a slut. Can I get her number? I have a special phone that can call comic book characters, so no obvious "she's not real" jokes. In fact, I'm the one she was talking to at the end of #21, so I don't even need her number.

Man, can I get that number? I created her so I should get a free one. I think I'll have Charlie give her a boob job. Hey--can you get the number for Spider-Man, too? I'm a big fan.

2) Any chance of a spin-off book that focuses on different characters in the world and what is going on outside the core group? I think it might destroy the mystery of what's going on, but I would love to have a companion series to read every other week.

No plans for a spin-off right now... or at this point... ever. But who knows what the future may bring.

3) Will invincible ever show up in these pages? Maybe a cameo as a zombie...

No chance.

4) Does the I.Q. of the zombie allow them to do anything other than walking and attacking? Could they swim, or ride a bike? Or possibly use the internet to write a letter to this column? (brains)

They're wicked awesome at volley ball... but I don't want to spoil things past saying that.

Okay, I'm done. Please print this. It is the second letter in 20 years of comic reading that I have sent, so you must be doing something right. Thanks so much for keeping me entertained.

Justin "slam-bizzle" Manis

((please print this. I will send you some pecan pie if you do))

If I don't find a freshly baked PECAN PIE in my P.O. Box next time I check it... I'm going to reprint this issue just so I can take this letter out. And... and I'll kick you in the nuts or something.

Okay folks, that's it for this month. I'll make it up to you soon. Sorry this letters page is so short this time around.

Be sure to check out Marvel Zombies, the new five-issue mini-series Sean Phillips and I are doing for MARVEL starting in December. It's going to be really cool. I promise.

See you in a couple weeks (I promise)

-Robert Kirkman

CHARACTERS



RICK

status: alive

Rick was a small town cop before the zombie plague hit. He has become the leader of the group he has sought refuge with.

relations:
LORI (wife)
CARL (son)



SHANE

status: dead

Shane was Rick's partner. An unhealthy infatuation for Lori drove him insane. He eventually tried to kill Rick, but was shot by Carl moments before he could pull the trigger.

relations:
none



MORGAN

status: unknown

Morgan and his son Duane have taken up residence in Rick's old neighbor's house. Little is known of their current whereabouts.

relations:
DUANE (son)



DUANE

status: unknown

Duane and his father have taken up residence in Rick's old neighbor's house. Duane likes to talk about bodily functions.

relations:
MORGAN (father)

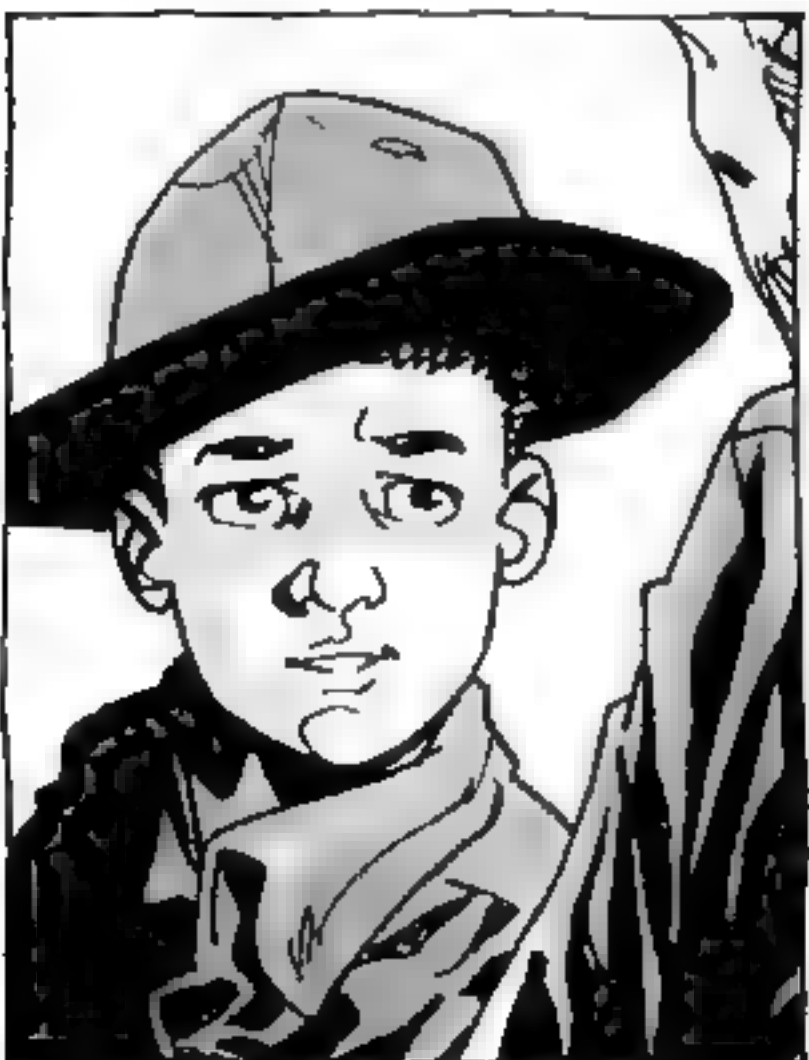


LORI

status: alive

Lori had an affair with Rick's partner Shane and is now pregnant. It is unknown who the child's father is. Rick is unaware of the affair.

relations:
RICK (husband)
CARL (son)

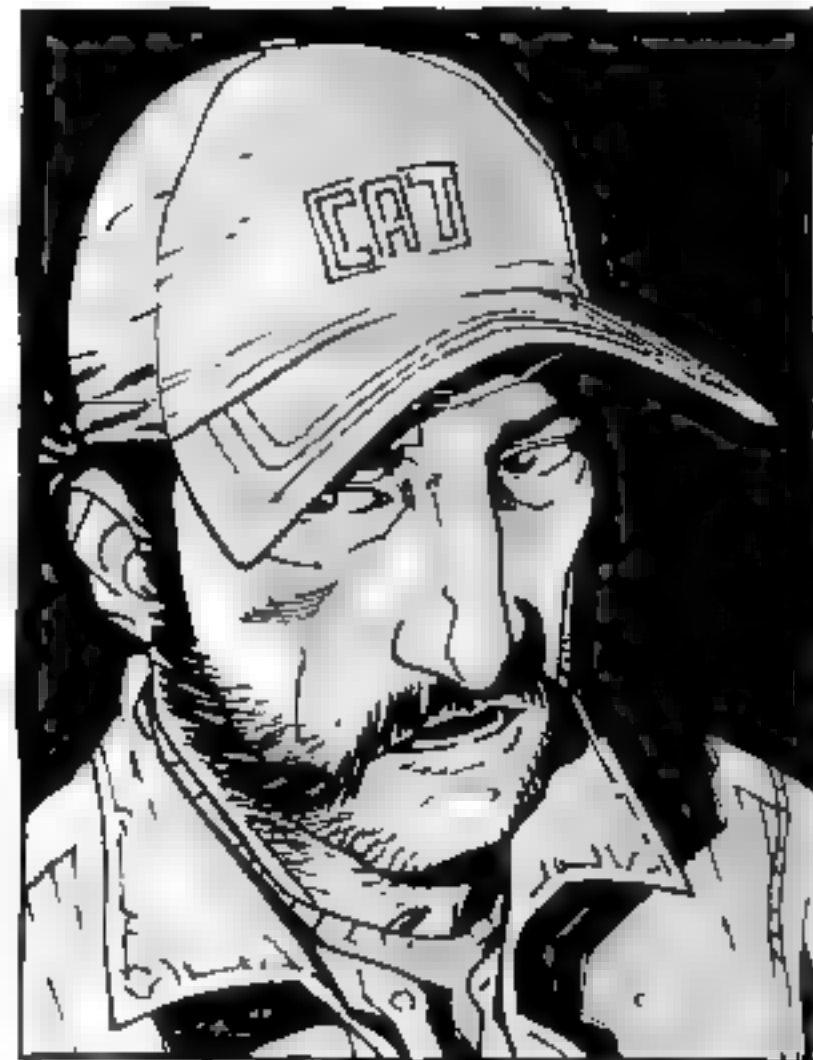


CARL

status: alive

Carl has saved his father's life but in doing so he has killed a man. The incident still weighs heavily on his conscience.

relations:
RICK (father)
LORI (mother)
SOPHIA (girlfriend)



JIM

status: dead

Jim watched his entire family get slaughtered as he escaped Atlanta. He was the first in the camp to die of a zombie bite.

relations:
none



ALLEN

status: alive

Allen is still haunted by the death of his wife. His grief is so severe he has begun to neglect his children.

relations:
DONNA (wife)
BEN & BILLY (sons)



DONNA

status: dead

Donna was the most outspoken person in the camp. She was killed by zombies in Wilshire Estates.

relations:
ALLEN (husband)
BEN & BILLY (sons)



BEN & BILLY

status: alive

Twin sons of Allen and Donna. They really don't say much. Especially after the death of their mother.

relations:
ALLEN (father)
DONNA (mother)



GLENN

status: alive

Glenn was the camp scavenger, always venturing into Atlanta in search of goods. He had a crush on Carol but is now with Maggie, Hershel's daughter.

relations:
MAGGIE (girlfriend)



DALE

status: alive

After losing his wife Dale met up with Amy and Andrea on his way to Atlanta. After Amy's death he and Andrea fell in love.

relations:
ANDREA (girlfriend)



CAROL

status: alive

Carol is insecure and very timid. She and Lori have become close friends. She is currently with Tyreese.

relations:
SOPHIA (daughter)
TYREESE (boyfriend)



SOPHIA

status: alive

After a long period of constant nagging, Sophia has convinced Carl to be her boyfriend. They hold hands.

relations:
CAROL (mother)
CARL (boyfriend)



ANDREA

status: alive

Andrea is the resident sharp shooter of the group. After watching her sister die, she's found comfort in the arms of Dale.

relations:
AMY (sister)
DALE (boyfriend)

CHARACTERS



AMY

status: dead

Andrea's fun loving younger sister. Died in Atlanta during the zombie attack where Jim was bitten.

relations:
ANDREA (sister)



TYREESE

status: alive

Tyreese has become a valuable member of the group after helping Rick during many zombie attacks. He's taking his daughter's death surprisingly well.

relations:
JULIE (daughter)
CAROL (girlfriend)



JULIE

status: dead

Julie and her boyfriend Chris formed a suicide pact in order to be together forever. Chris shot first and killed her before she could kill him.

relations:
TYREESE (father)
CHRIS (boyfriend)



CHRIS

status: dead

Chris was killed at the hands of Tyreese shortly after killing his daughter, Julie in a failed suicide attempt. Only Rick knows.

relations:
JULIE (girlfriend)



OTIS

status: alive

Otis was living on Hershel's farm for safety. He has stayed behind to take care of the livestock while preparations are being made to move them to the prison.

relations:
PATRICIA (ex-girlfriend)



HERSHEL

status: alive

After witnessing the deaths of nearly all of his children, he's not in a very good state of mind.

relations:
SHAWN, ARLNOLD,
BILLY (sons)
LACEY, MAGGIE,
RACHEL,
SUSIE (daughters)



MAGGIE

status: alive

Hershel's only living daughter. Currently involved with Glenn.

relations:
HERSHEL (father)
SHAWN, ARLNOLD,
BILLY (brothers)
LACEY, RACHEL,
SUSIE (sisters)



BILLY

status: alive

Hershel's only living son.

relations:
HERSHEL (father)
SHAWN, ARLNOLD,
(brothers)
LACEY, MAGGIE,
RACHEL,
SUSIE (sisters)



LACEY

status: dead

Hershel's eldest daughter. Killed by the zombies he kept in his barn.

relations:
HERSHEL (father)
SHAWN, ARLNOLD,
BILLY (brothers)
MAGGIE, RACHEL,
SUSIE (sisters)



ARNOLD

status: dead

Hershel's second eldest son. Killed by his zombie brother, Shawn who Hershel kept in their barn.

relations:
HERSHEL (father)
SHAWN, BILLY (brothers)
LACEY, MAGGIE, RACHEL,
SUSIE (sisters)



RACHEL

status: dead

Hershel's second youngest daughter. Killed by Thomas, in the prison barber shop.

relations:
HERSHEL (father)
SHAWN, ARLNOLD,
BILLY (brothers)
LACEY, MAGGIE,
SUSIE (sisters)



SUSIE

status: dead

Hershel's youngest daughter. Killed by Thomas, in the prison barber shop.

relations:
HERSHEL (father)
SHAWN, ARLNOLD,
BILLY (brothers)
LACEY, MAGGIE,
RACHEL (sisters)



PATRICIA

status: alive

Otis' bleeding heart ex-girlfriend. Had a crush on Thomas. She's very misguided.

relations:
OTIS (ex-boyfriend)



AXEL

status: alive

One of the left over convicts from the prison. In for armed robbery. Little else is known.

relations:
none



THOMAS

status: dead

Serial killer. Killed Rachel and Susie, and attempted to kill Andrea before Rick beat him nearly to death and Maggie shot him.

relations:
none

CHARACTERS



ANDREW

status: unknown
Another convict, in for drug possession, selling, etc. Fell in love with Dexter, his cellmate.

relations:
DEXTER (boyfriend)



DEXTER

status: dead
Another convict, in for murdering his wife and her lover. Finds comfort in the arms of Andrew, his cellmate.

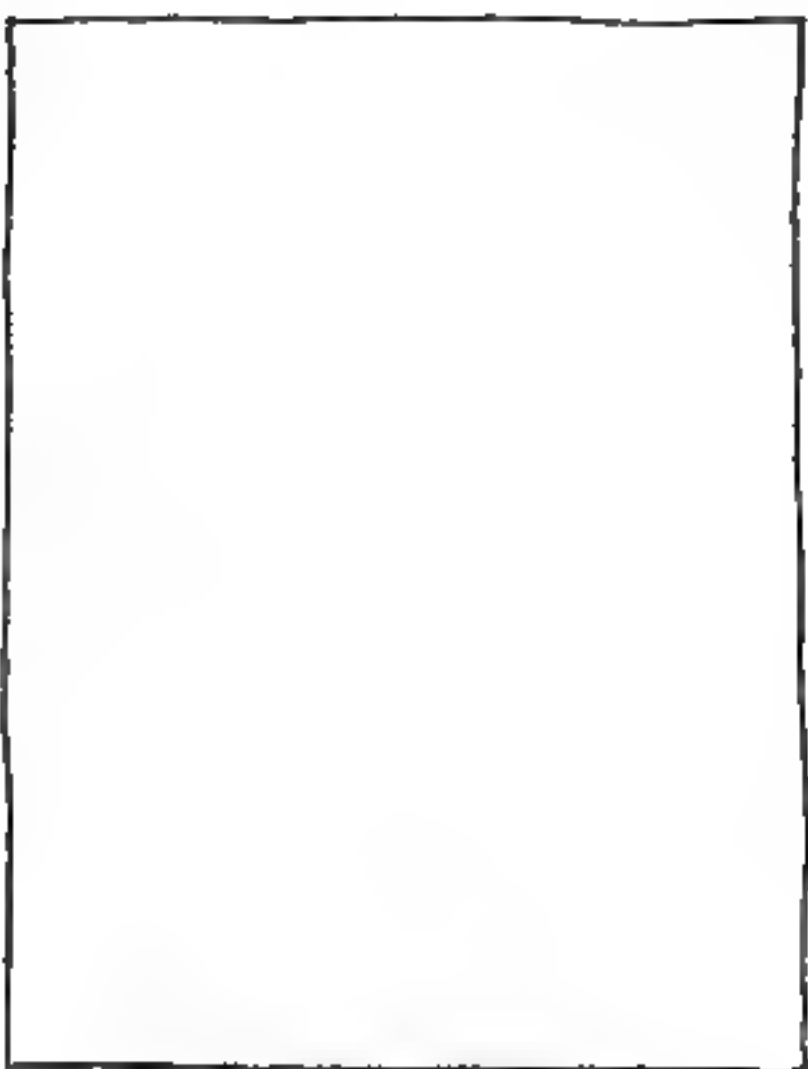
relations:
ANDREW (boyfriend)



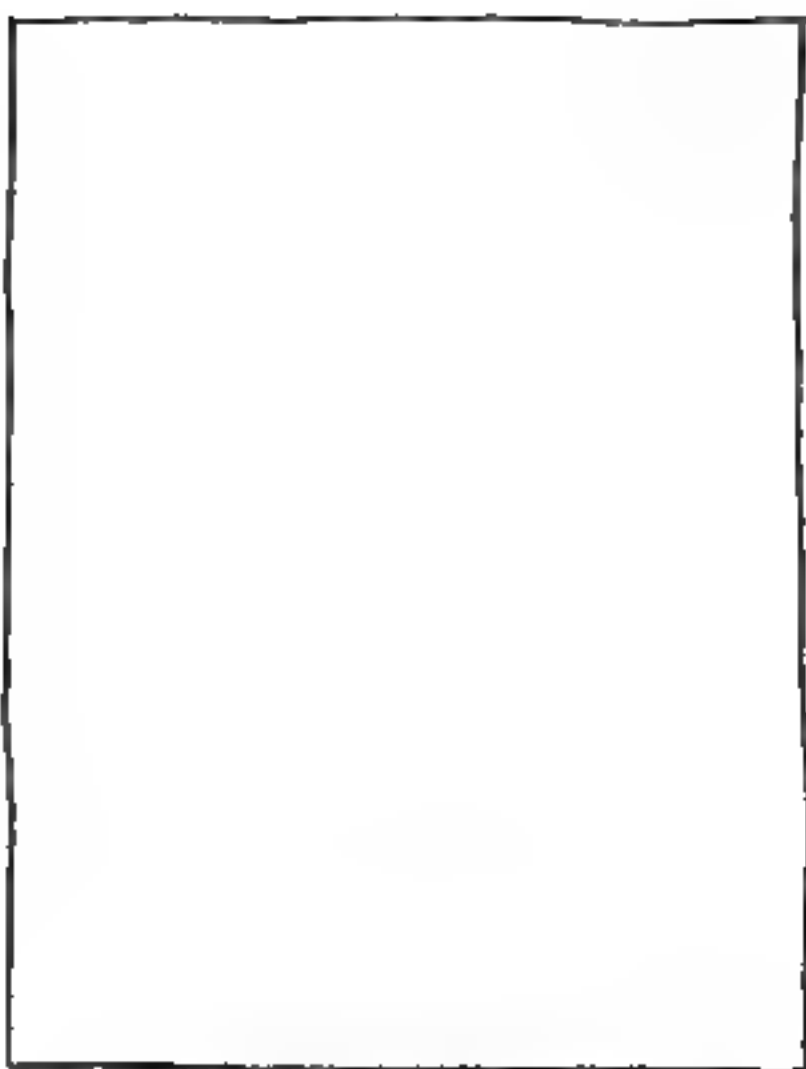
MICHONNE

status: alive
Little is currently known about Michonne.

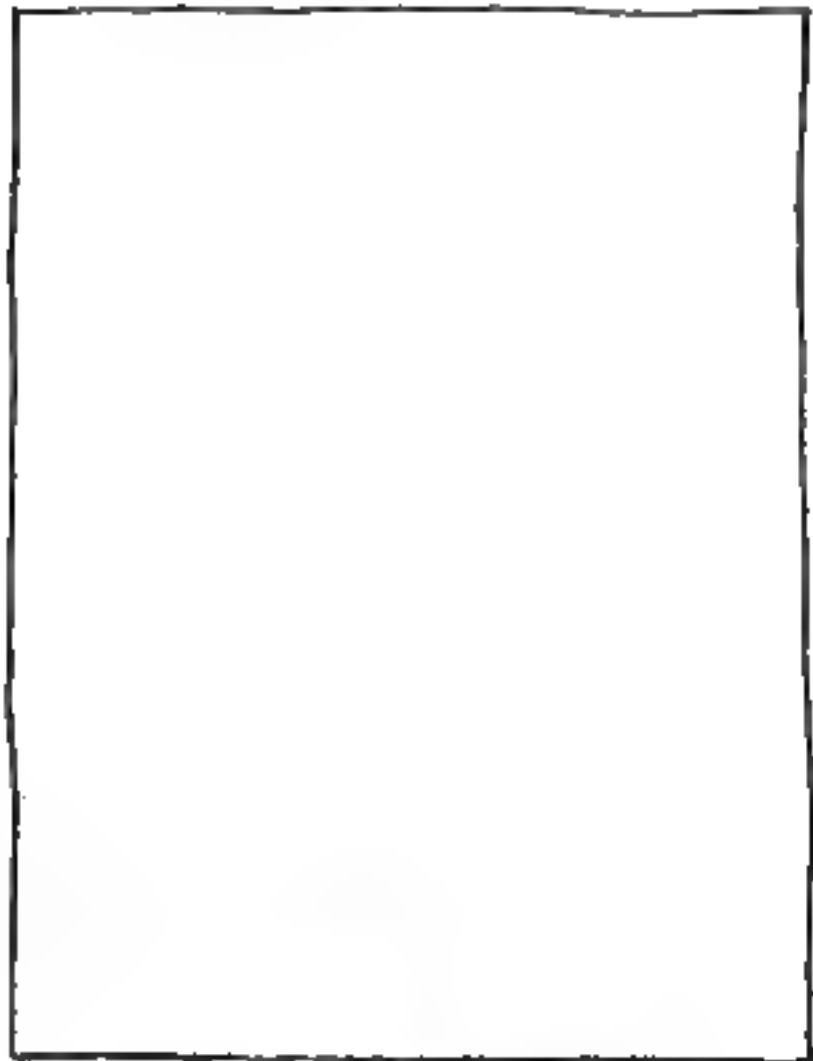
relations:
NONE



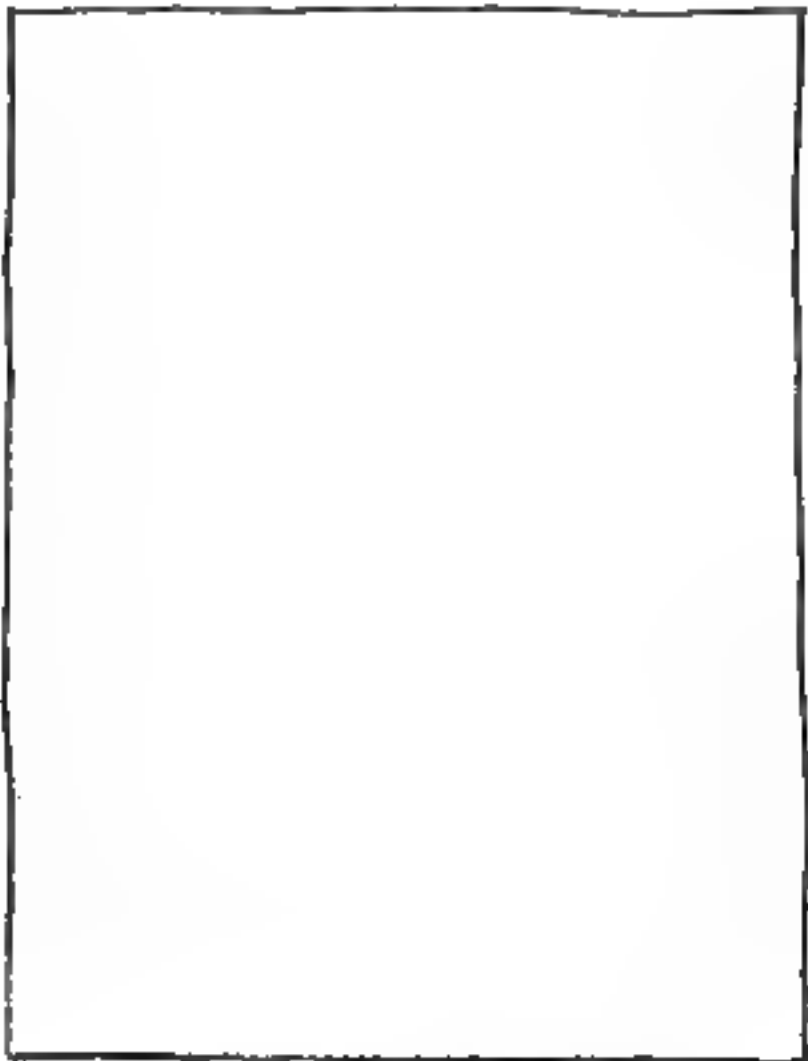
**COMING
SOON**



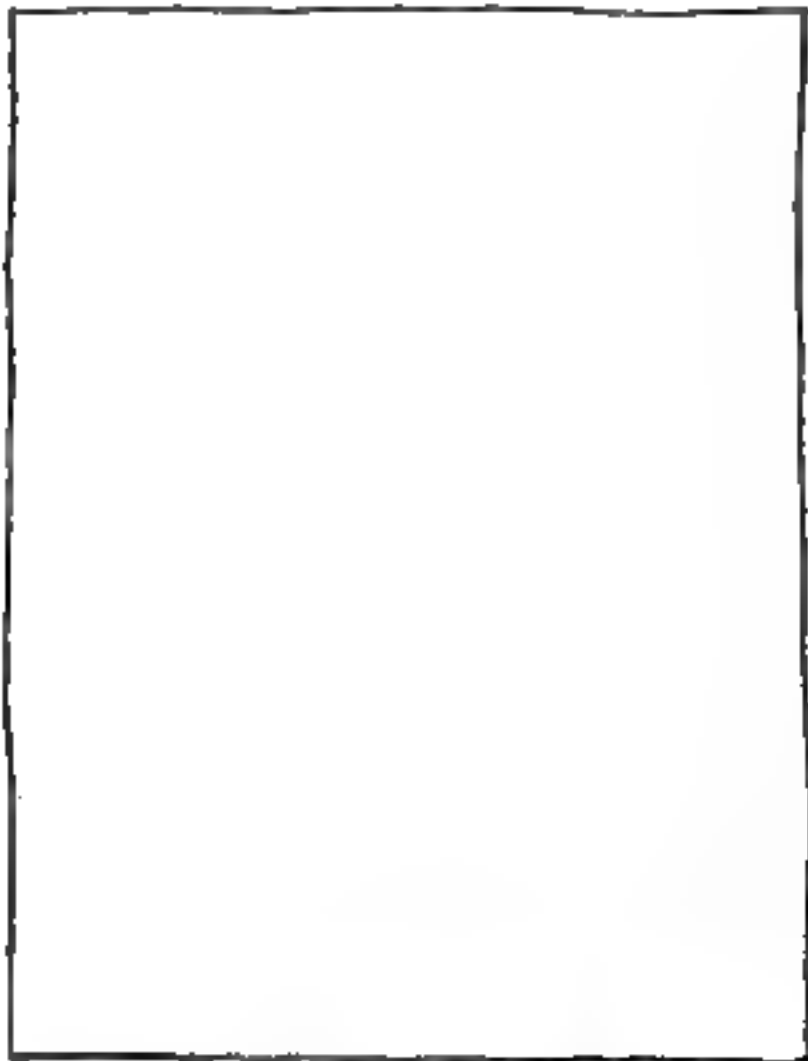
**COMING
SOON**



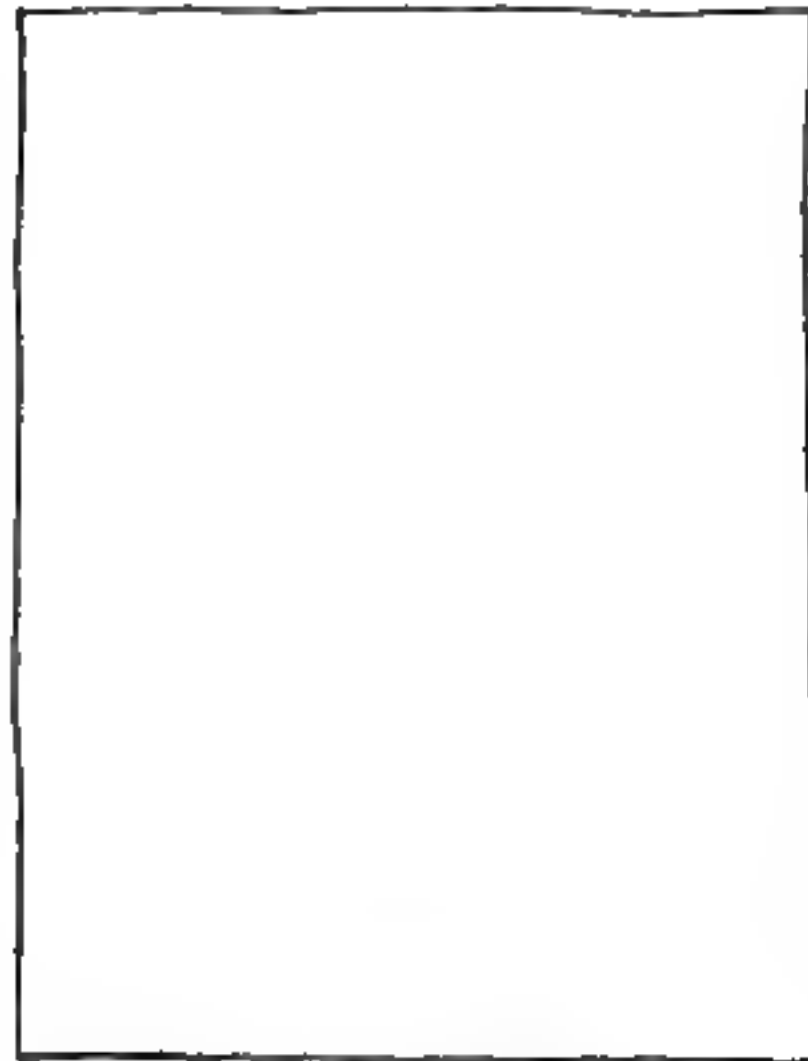
**COMING
SOON**



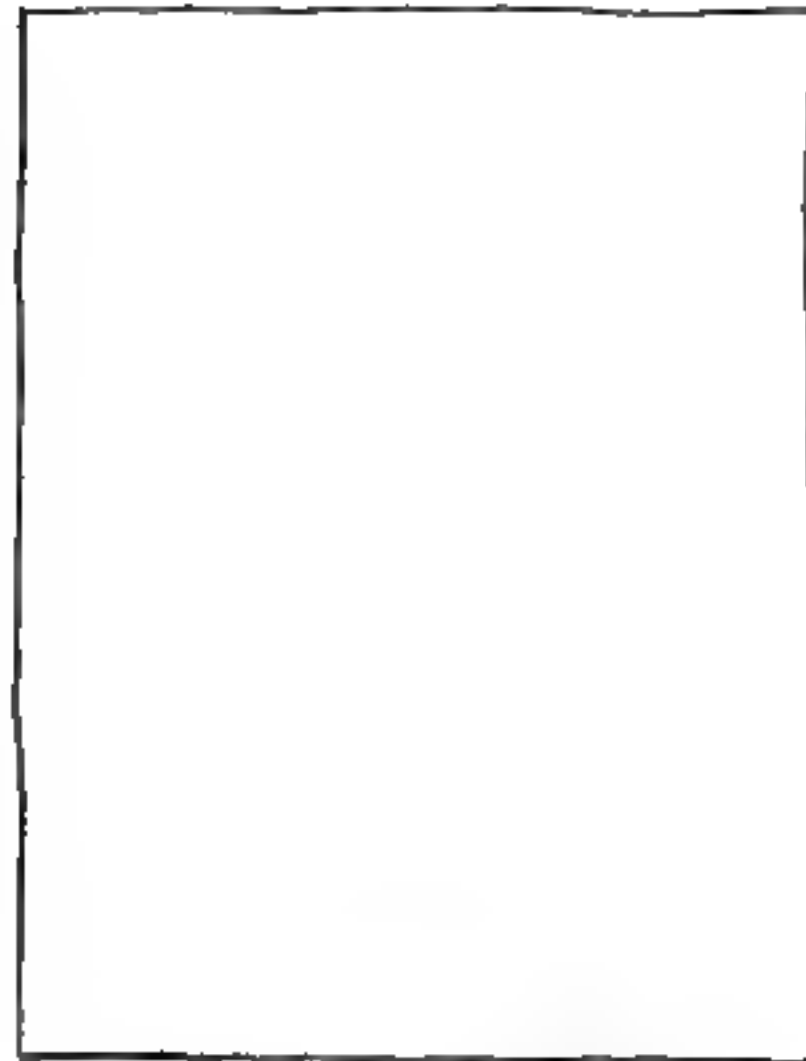
**COMING
SOON**



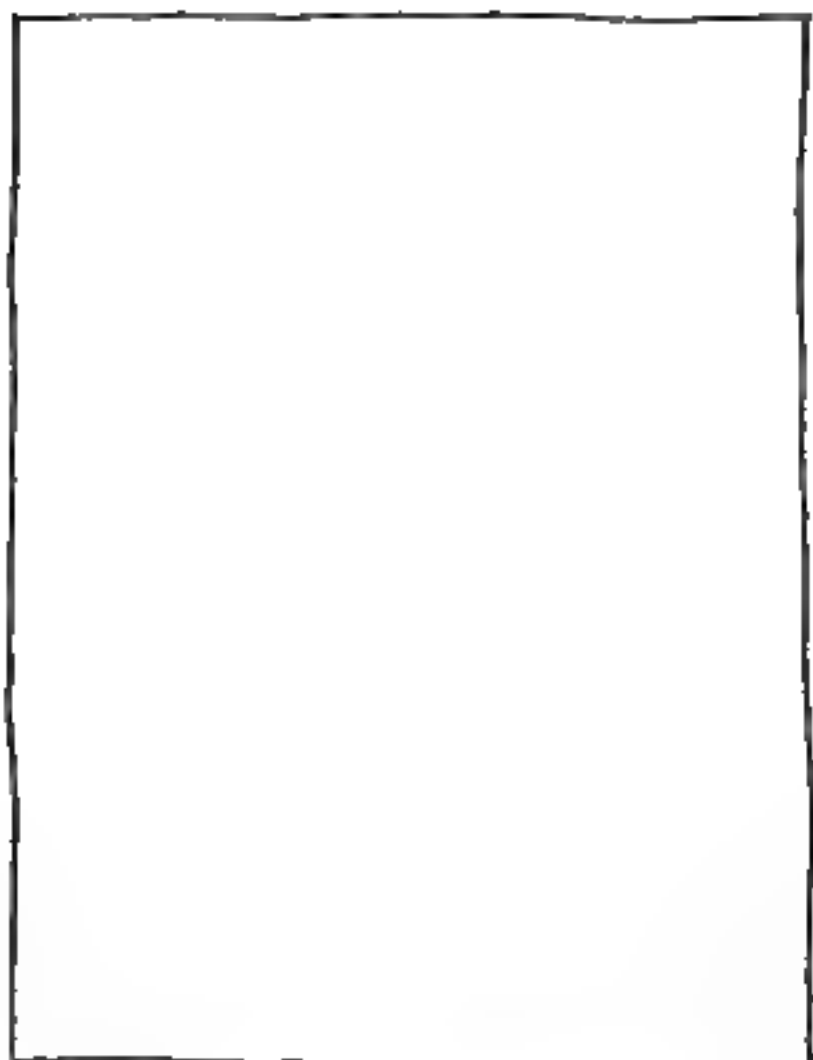
**COMING
SOON**



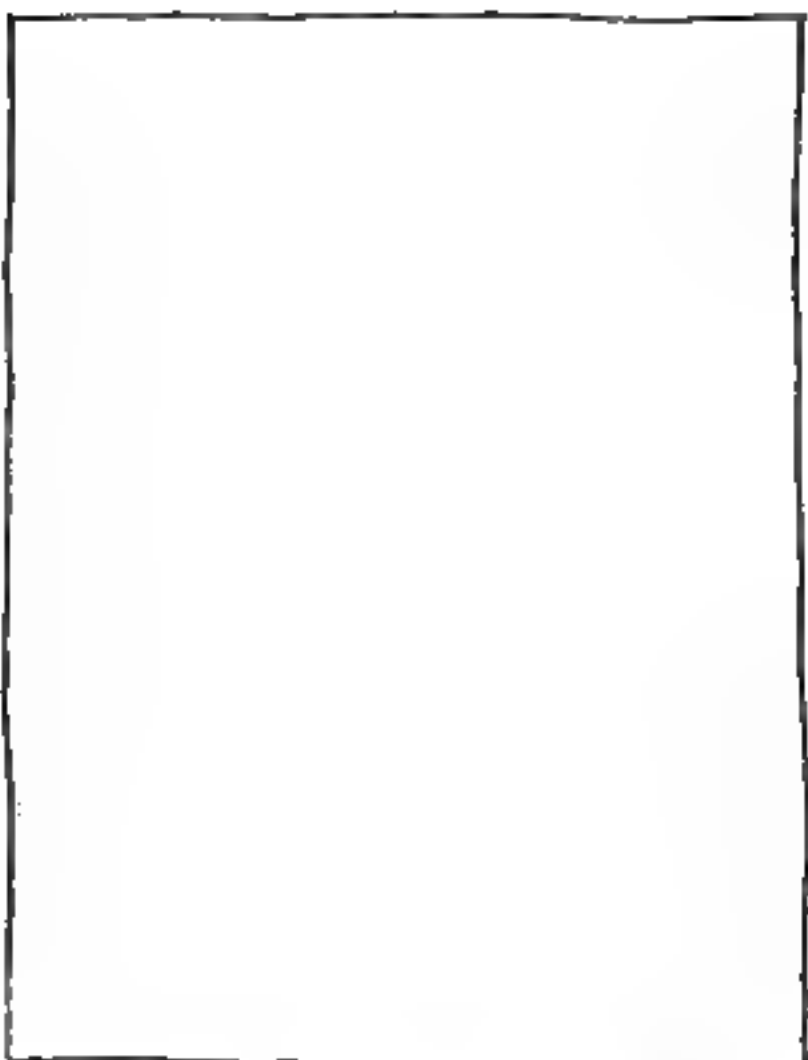
**COMING
SOON**



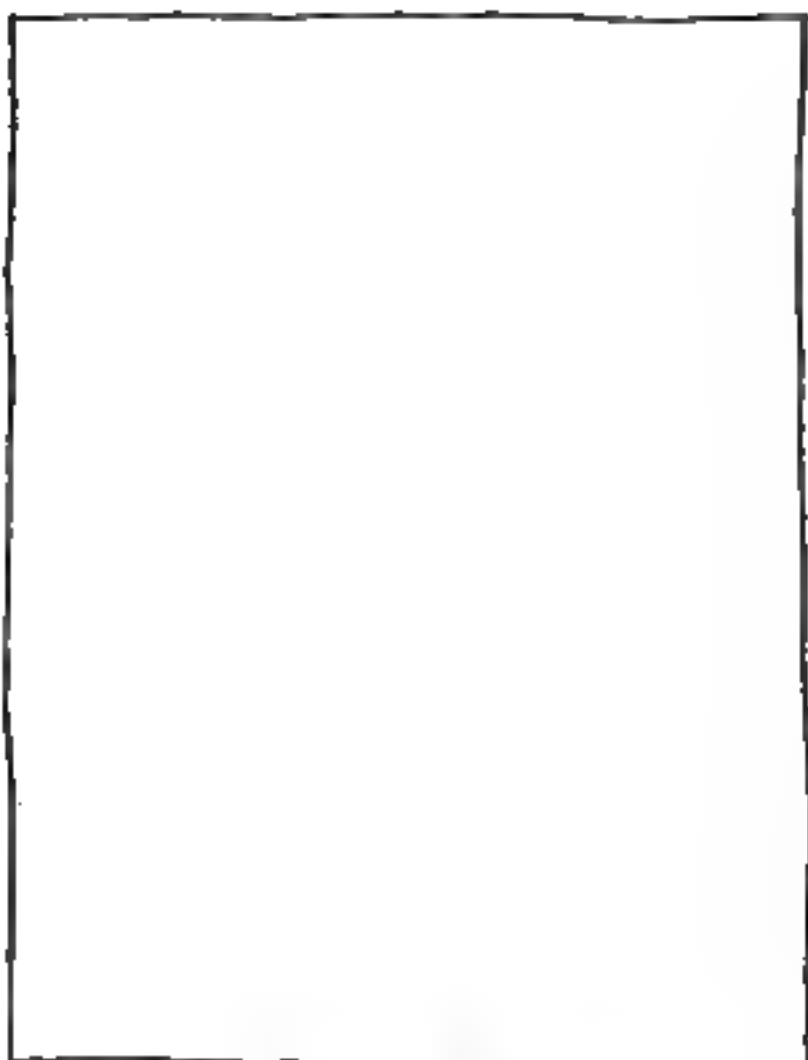
**COMING
SOON**



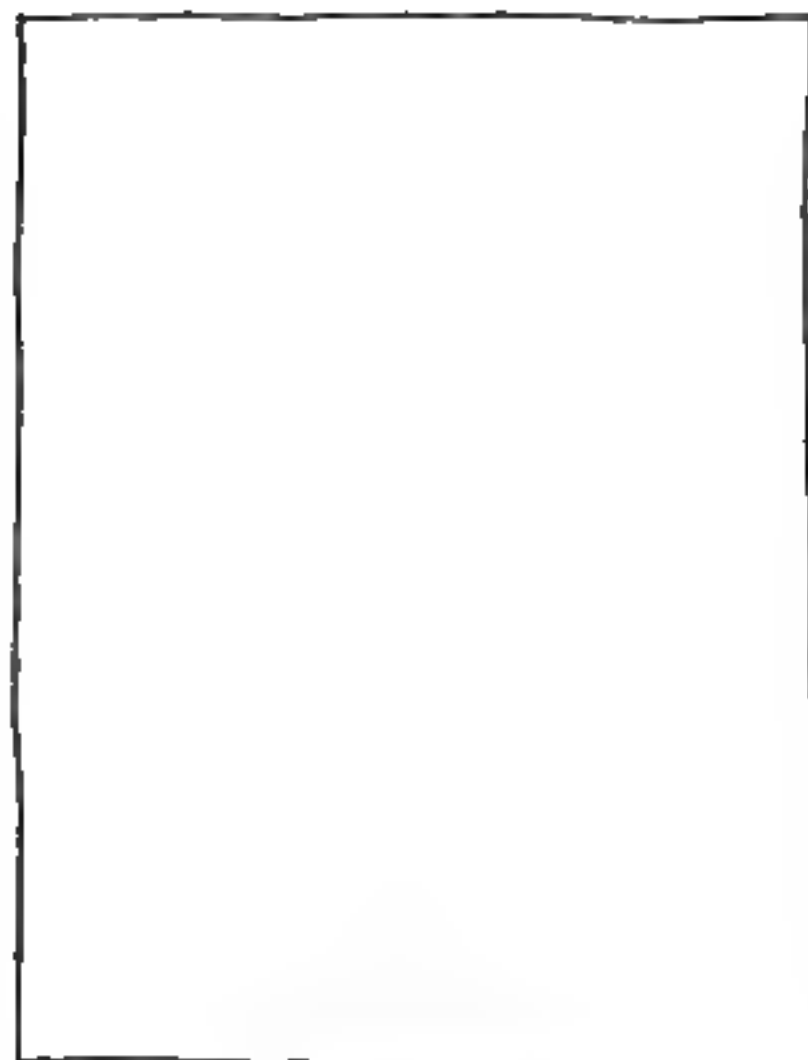
**COMING
SOON**



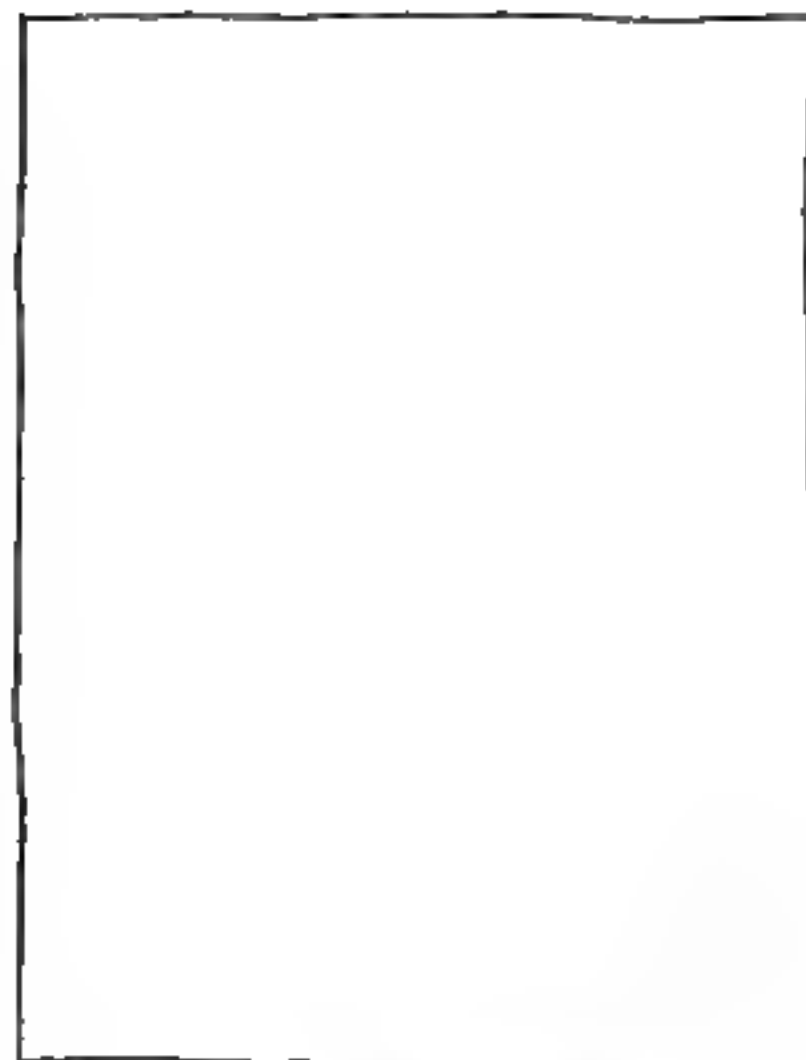
**COMING
SOON**



**COMING
SOON**



**COMING
SOON**



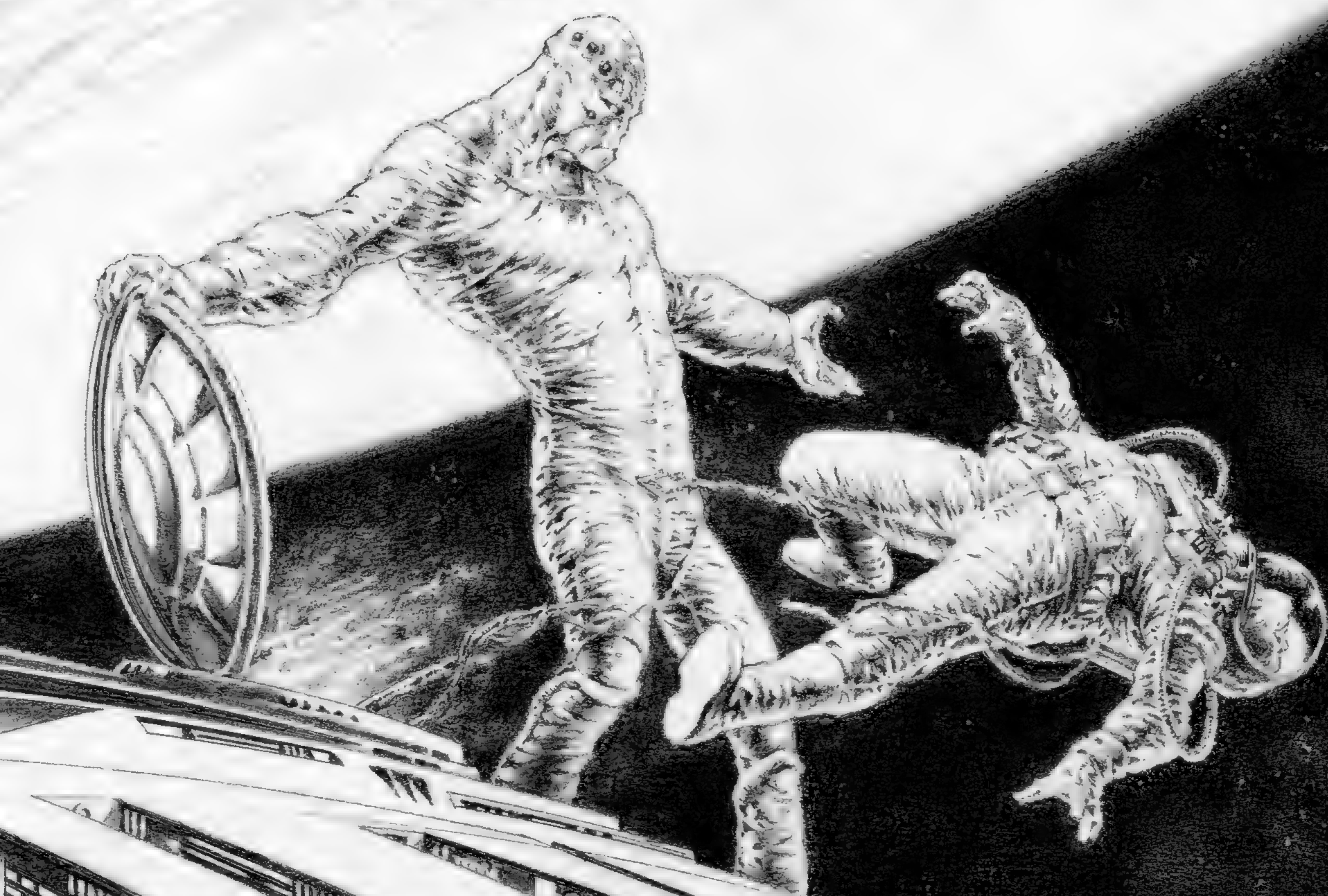
**COMING
SOON**

THOMAS JANE · STEVE NILES

LEWIS LAROSA · TIM BRADSTREET

Plaza

ISSUE 2



IN THIS ISSUE *ALIEN DEATH SPIDERS!*



www.imagecomics.com

© 2006 Thomas Jane & Steve Niles. All Rights Reserved.

JANUARY 2006 • \$2.99

DEADLY DUO

Mack.

Panda.

Surrounded.

One bullet.

One chance.

**JASON PEARSON'S
DEADLY DUO RETURNS
IN AN ALL-NEW
48-PAGE ONE SHOT!**



www.imagecomics.com

© 2005 12 Gauge Comics. All Rights Reserved.

**YOU WANT COSMIC?
WE'VE GOT TWICE THE
COSMIC IN JANUARY!**

JOE CASEY & TOM SCIOLI

GØDLAND

**TWO BOOKS SHIPPING
THE SAME DAY!**



**HELLO,
COSMIC!
TRADE
PAPERBACK**

COLLECTS #1-6

**144 PGS
FULL COLOR
\$14.99**

#7

**"ACID
RAINDROPS"**

**32 PGS
FULL COLOR
\$2.99**

"Anyone who gets
all misty thinking about
Stan Lee and Jack Kirby's
FANTASTIC FOUR
will love *GØDLAND*."

— ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY



www.imagecomics.com

© 2005 Joe Casey & Tom Scioli. All Rights Reserved.

PROBABLY THE BEST SUPERHERO COMIC BOOK IN THE UNIVERSE!

INVINCIBLE

VOLUME 6:
A DIFFERENT WORLD
TRADE PAPERBACK

ROBERT KIRKMAN • RYAN OTTLEY
BILL CRABTREE

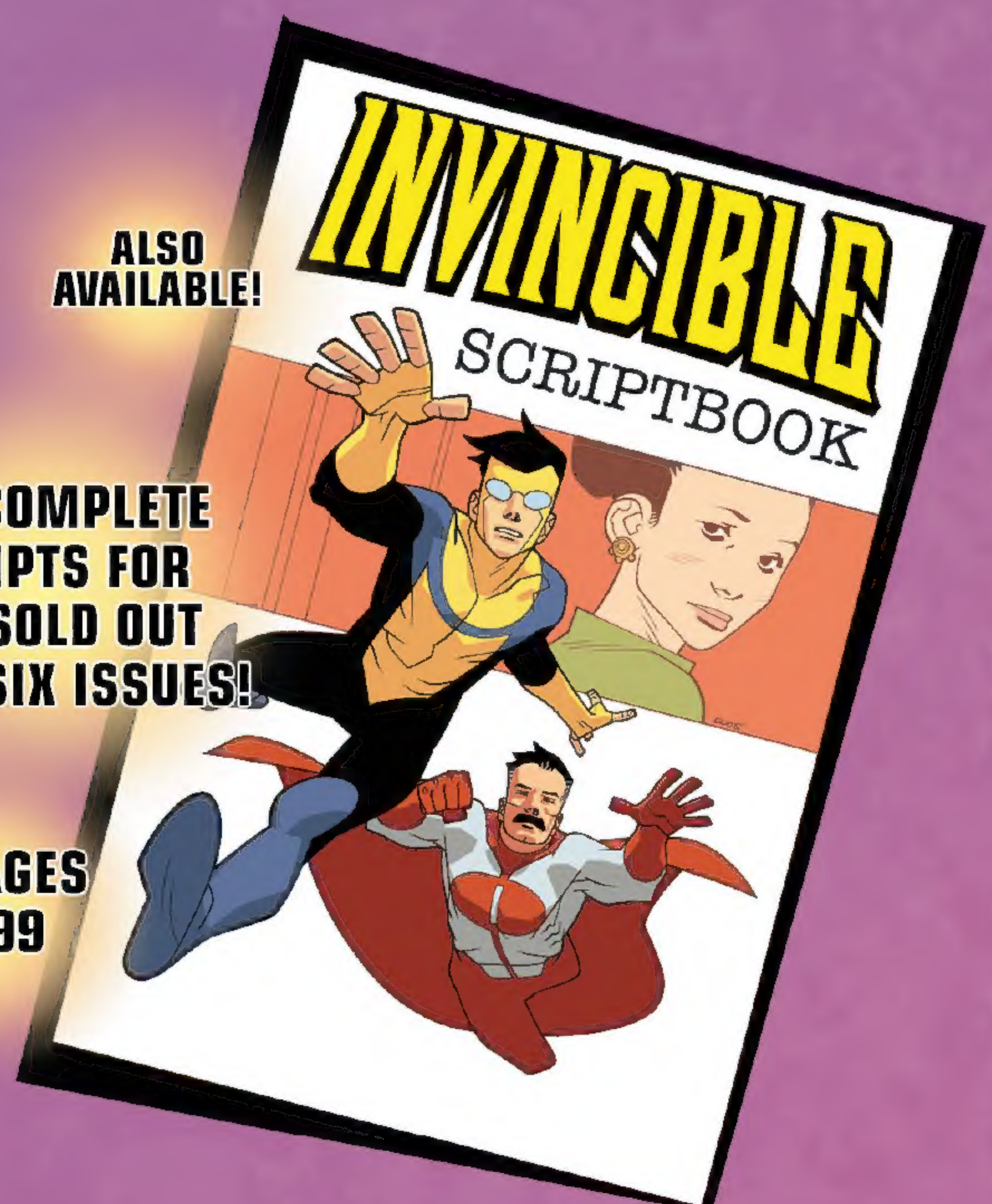
COLLECTING #25-30
168 PGS • FULL COLOR
\$14.99



ALSO
AVAILABLE!

THE COMPLETE
SCRIPTS FOR
THE SOLD OUT
FIRST SIX ISSUES!

40 PAGES
\$3.99



www.imagecomics.com

© 2005 Robert Kirkman & Corey Walker. All Rights Reserved.

IMAGECOMICS.COM

THE WALKING DEAD #23



EMPIRE